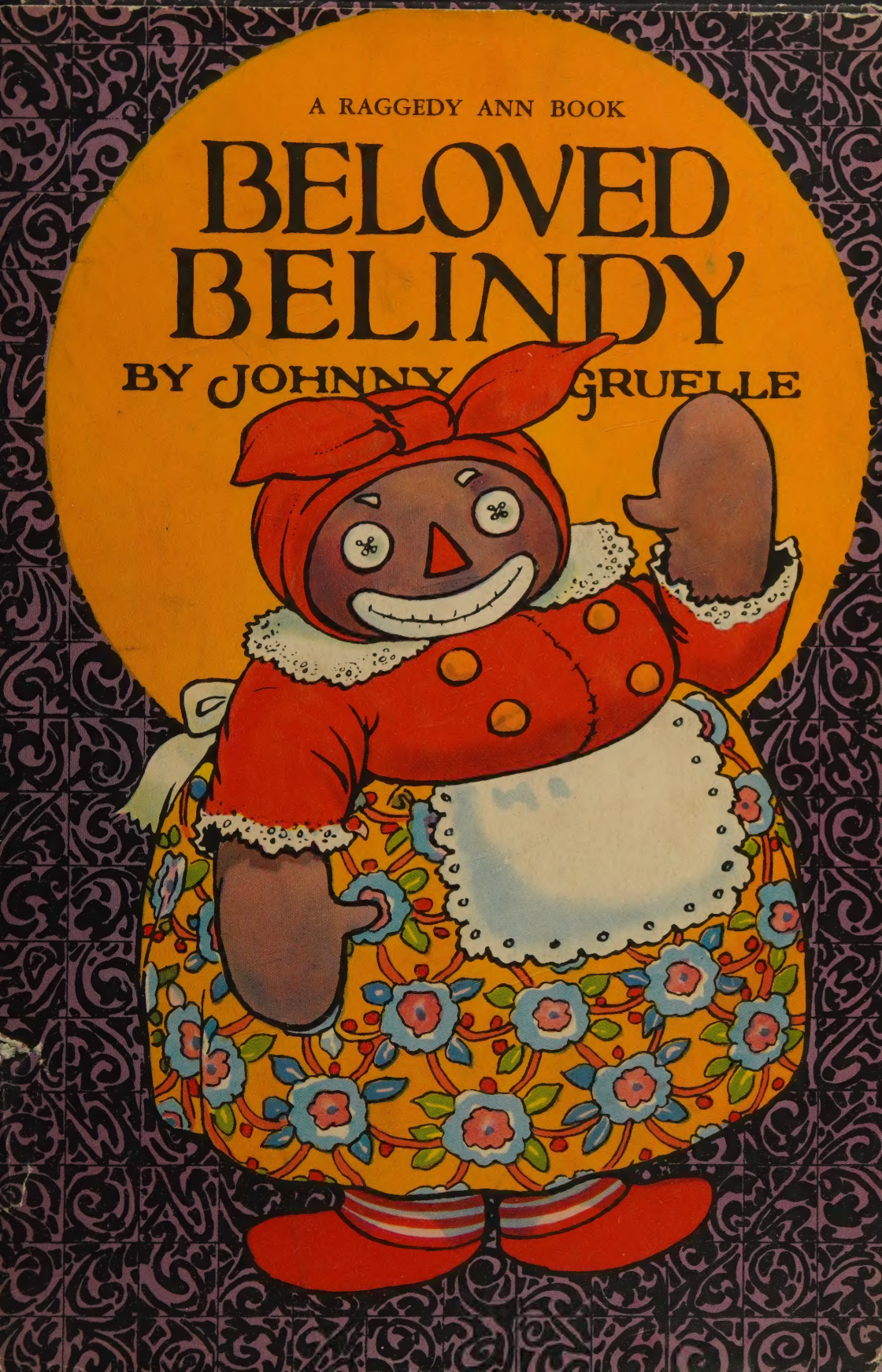
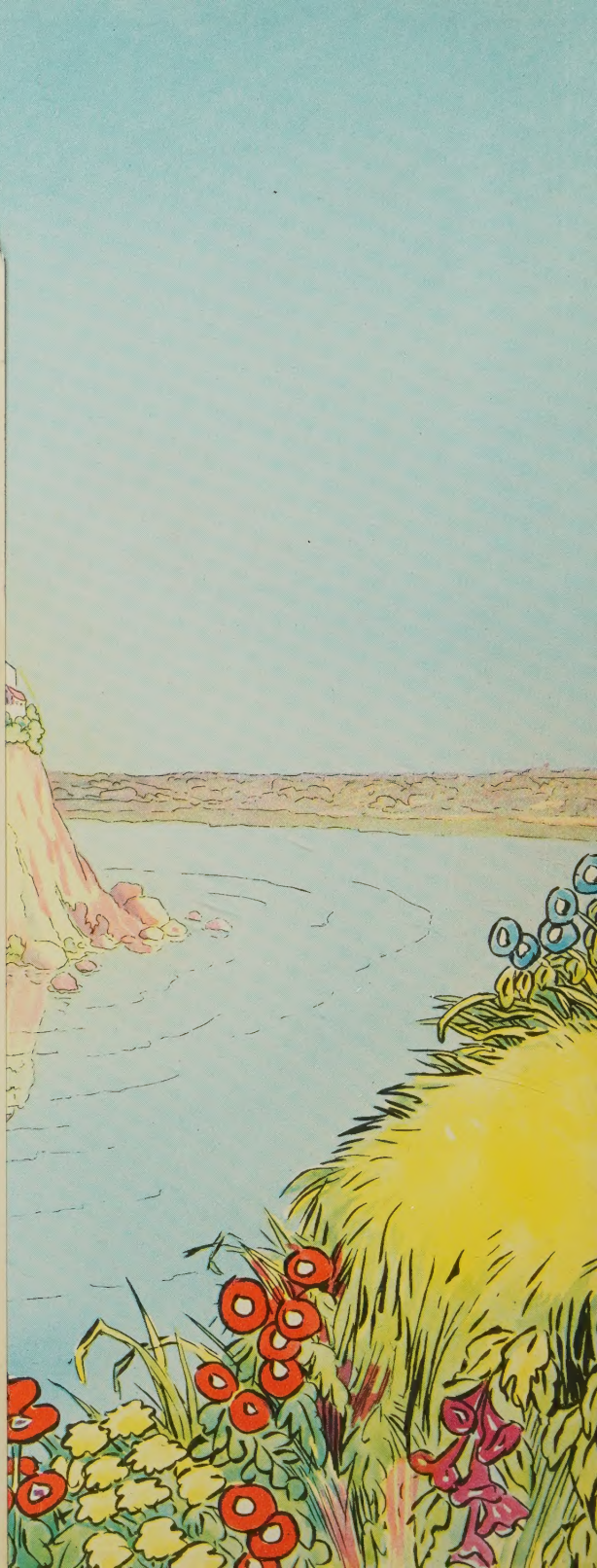
A RAGGEDY ANN BOOK

BELOVED BELINDY

BY JOHNNY GRUELLE





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and
Illustrated
by
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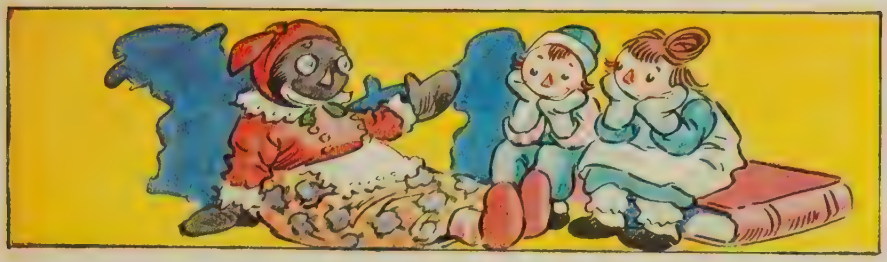


BELOVED BELINDY

CHAPTER ONE

BELOVED BELINDY was the mammy of Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy and of all the other dolls in the nursery. She was the nicest, fattest, soft rag doll you would ever care to cuddle. And the smile painted on her broad face was as cheery as could be. One just has to be happy, when one wears a happy smile, or else the smile will soon go away. But when a smile is painted on, it is almost certain never to come off.

Belindy's rag body was stuffed with the softest cotton mother could find and the fleecy cotton made Beloved Belindy very fat. But when there were no old folks around, Beloved Belindy could run just as fast as any of the other dolls, for her cotton-stuffed body was light.

One day, when all the folks were away from home, and Beloved Belindy and the other dolls were alone in the nursery, Beloved Belindy sprang to her feet and cried, "I know what let's do!"

"What shall we do, Beloved Belindy?" the other dolls all asked, their eyes dancing with excitement.

"We can have an amusement park!" Beloved Belindy replied, as she smoothed out her apron and wiped her white pearl button eyes with her pocket hanky.

"But how can we have an amusement park, Beloved Belindy?" Sarah, a pretty doll with yellow curls, asked. "There is nothing to make an amusement park here in the nursery!"

"Oh yes, there is, Sarah!" Beloved Belindy replied. "I have been sitting here ever so long, thinking and thinking and thinking, and when one thinks and thinks of how to have fun, he's certain to think of lots and lots of ways."

All the dolls crowded around Beloved Belindy and began talking at once. Beloved Belindy held up her rag hand and, when the dolls became quiet, she said, "We have a toy piano, so that will do for the music you always find in an amusement park. And there is an umbrella we can open and turn upside down. That will be the merry-go-round. And we can take all the picture books and stand them up against the wall and turn the pages over and over. That will be the moving pictures!"

"You see, Sarah," Percy, the policeman doll, said, "Beloved Belindy has thought of everything!" The policeman doll was named Percy, because he was so kind and gentle. "And I will be the policeman who arrests anyone who does not behave!" All the dolls laughed for they knew that Percy, the policeman, would never arrest anyone except in fun.

"How shall we make the umbrella merry-go-round go?" asked Rosie, a pretty brown-eyed doll with a large bonnet.

"My! That will be easy!" Beloved Belindy replied. "We will ask the two horsies to pull it around. They can take turns!"

Percy, the policeman, ran over to the toy box and lifted out the two horsies. They were lovely gray ones with black spots painted upon their sides, and they had silken manes and tails. They were really wooden horsies, but they had been covered with a smooth canton flannel that made them look as real as could be. Once upon a time, when Santa Claus first brought the two pretty gray horsies, they were hitched to a shiny milk wagon with patent leather harness. The milk wagon had been broken long ago, and thrown away, but the two horsies were just as good as new and the red platform on which they stood was as shiny as when they first came into the nursery.

"Do you want to have some fun?" Percy, the policeman, asked as he pushed the horsies towards the dolls.

"Yes, indeed!" both horsies replied, in soft woodeny tones, "We are always glad when you dolls let us play with you!"

"There! You see!" cried Beloved Belindy, jumping up and down, "the nice horsies will be glad to make the merry-go-round run for us!"

So Beloved Belindy and Percy, the policeman, opened the umbrella and fixed it so it would not turn over; the two horsies were hitched to the wires of the umbrella, and everything was ready.

Sarah made little paper tickets and divided them among the dolls, then there was a wild scramble and climbing upon the merry-go-around.

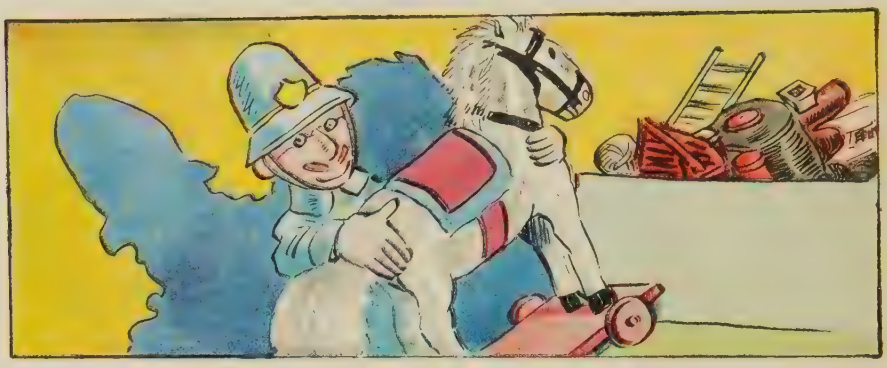
At last all the dolls were seated and Percy, the policeman, blew his little whistle. This was the signal for the two horsies to start pulling upon the strings with which they were tied to the merry-go-round. They went slowly, at first, then faster and faster, until you could scarcely see the spokes in the nickel-plated wheels of their platforms.

All the dolls laughed and screamed as they flew around and called to the horsies to run still faster and faster.

The two little horsies tried to run faster, but when they were running as fast as they could, one of the front wheels came off of one of the platforms and both the horsies turned over and over. The umbrella merry-go-round stopped so suddenly that it tipped over, and the dolls went helter-skelter across the nursery floor.

This was all right for Beloved Belindy and the dolls who were made of cloth, but it was not all right for Sarah and Rosie, whose pretty heads were made of china.

And when Sarah and Rosie fell from the umbrella merry-go-round and slid across the floor, their heads bumped together. There was a loud crack and pieces of china flew in all directions.



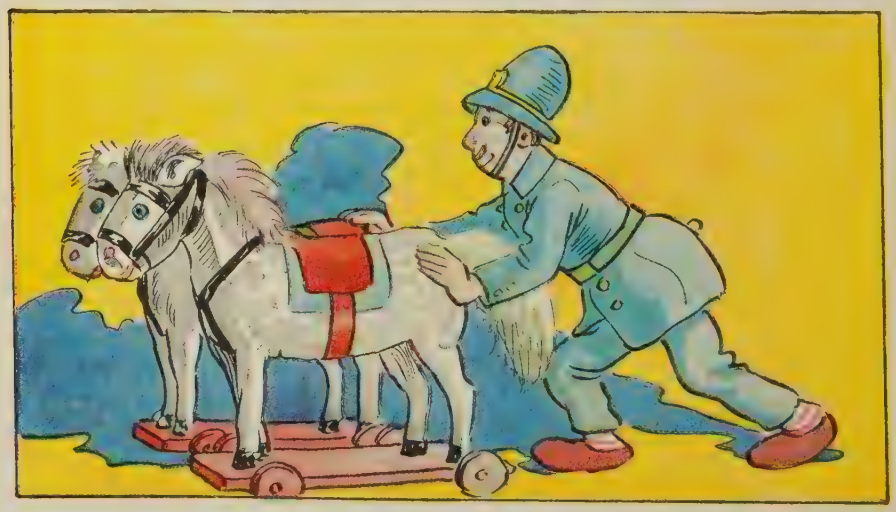
Beloved Belindy ran to Sarah and Rosie as soon as she could get upon her feet and she gave a cry when she looked down at her two friends.

Both Sarah and Rosie had lost their faces and the other dolls could look right inside their heads and see how their eyes worked.

"I hope you are not hurt much!" Percy, the policeman, said. He lifted Sarah and sat her up. Beloved Belindy sat Rosie up, too, and the dolls all felt very sad.

Both Sarah and Rosie put up their china hands and felt of their broken heads, but neither could say a word.

"Dear me!" Beloved Belindy cried, "We must pick up



all the pieces and see if we can fit them together! What if Marcella should come and find Sarah and Rosie broken? She would wonder how it happened! We must try and fix them right away!"

So all the dolls hunted up the broken pieces of Sarah's and Rosie's faces, while Beloved Belindy went downstairs for the mending glue.

When Beloved Belindy returned, the dolls had found every chip of the broken faces, except one little tiny speck of Rosie's nose. And Beloved Belindy put the mending glue on each separate piece and very carefully fitted each into place.

It was a good deal like fitting together a cut-out puzzle of the United States, except that each piece of china did not have printing on it to make it easy.

But after awhile Beloved Belindy pressed the last piece into place and helped Sarah and Rosie to walk to their little beds.

"Now you must lie still and rest awhile until the glue gets good and hard!" Beloved Belindy told them. "Because if you should wiggle and twist about, you might press some of

the pieces so that they would dry lopsided; then you would not look pretty."

So Sarah and Rosie lay very quietly until the mending glue had become so hard they were certain the pieces would not slip. Then, when Beloved Belindy looked them over to make certain, she gave a glad cry.

"Just see!" she called to all the dolls, "The mending glue must have been magic glue! I cannot see a single crack where Sarah's and Rosie's faces were broken!"

And when the dolls all crowded around and looked, they laughed happily, too, for even Rosie's nose which had lost a chip at the end, was now as perfect and pretty as it had always been.

"After this, we will try and pick out nicer games to play," Beloved Belindy said, "for while those of us who are soft can be thrown about, the ones with china heads will have to be more careful! So we will not play amusement park any more today!"

Percy, the policeman, unhitched the two little horsies from the umbrella merry-go-round and put the wheel back on the platform.

The dolls were thanking the two horsies for helping them play when the door-bell rang, and dolls and horsies had to hurry to the positions they were in before they had started to play. There were sounds of running feet in the hall below, and up the stairs and into the nursery came Marcella. "I rang the bell and rang the bell!" she said, "and I almost began to think you were not at home!" she laughed. "But I am glad you are all looking so well and happy, for I'm going to have a tea-party right away."

And the dolls were very glad, too, that everything had turned out happily. They knew by the way Marcella rattled a bag she had in her hand, that every doll would soon enjoy some of the candy rubbed over her mouth as they sat at the tea-table.

CHAPTER TWO

THE play-house out in the orchard was a big dry-goods box. Daddy had cut two little windows in the sides and there was a curtain across the front for a door. The curtain could be pulled to one side when the house was to be open, and closed again, if it looked stormy, or if Marcella wished to play "time-to-go-to-bed."

There was a fine front porch on the play-house, too. The roof of the front porch was a bit of canvas stretched out to two posts in the ground. And there was an old rug which mother had given for the front porch floor.

The play-house was just beneath an old apple-tree, where the apple blossoms could blow down just like snow.

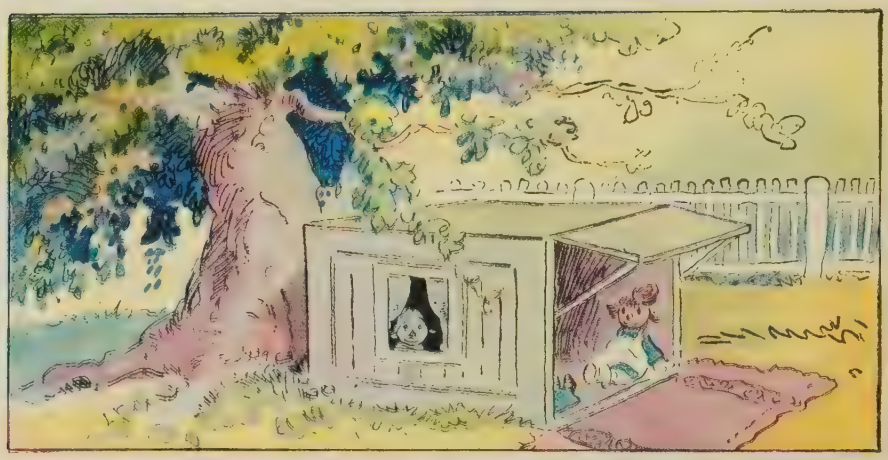
When the wind blew hard and the apple blossoms came falling down, the dolls were usually taken inside the play-house and bundled up in their heavy clothing. The door was pulled shut and the fire in the little cooking stove was started.

Of course, the fire in the little toy stove was only red crinkly paper and it was never really-for-surely lighted, but the red crinkly paper looked very much like a fire and the dolls were placed around the stove in their little chairs so they would not feel the cold—just pretend cold, you know.

The play-house was used only in summer time, when it was lovely outdoors. But apple blossoms falling about looked so much like snow, it was very easy to pretend that it was winter time.

It was lots and lots of fun pretending this, for the dolls usually caught the "Croup" and the "Influence" and had "Colds in their noses," when the apple blossom snow came floating down.

They were given medicine made of brown sugar and water, every two minutes, and they enjoyed the sweetened medicine as it was poured in their mouths. Of course, the sweetened water medicine made them very sticky inside their heads and quite often there were traces of it around their mouths, but



it was all in fun and very pleasant.

And this day, after a very heavy fragrant snow storm, the dolls had been placed around the red crinkly paper fire so they would be nice and warm. Beloved Belindy and Percy, the policeman had their throats wrapped up, and Sarah and Rosie and Cleety, the clown, had been put to bed with the "Influence." After all this had been done, their mistress discovered that she had used up every speck of the lovely medicine, a few minutes before, for tea.

"Now you children must sit quietly and not run out into the snow storm," Marcella told them, "for you are all quite ill and mother does not wish you to be worse! If you run out and get your feet wet, you will all have to go to the hospital. I shall run in to the Doctor's and get you some medicine. I'll be right back!"

So the dolls just sat in the nice little dry-goods box playhouse and looked at the pictures painted on the walls.

All the pictures were beautiful. They had been cut from magazines.

Percy, the policeman, was sitting where he could look out of the side window up the path to the house, so he could watch Marcella as she ran to the Doctor's.

"She just went in the kitchen," Percy said, half to himself.

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Beloved Belindy reached over and "shooed" three flies away from Sarah's pretty face. "Now you flies just go on outside!" Beloved Belindy said. "Marcella will be back presently and she will get the swatter!"

"ZZZZZZ!" the flies cried as they flew about the play-house.

"Yes, we know you are after the sugar-and-water tea around Sarah's mouth!" Beloved Belindy said. "But Marcella does not wish flies in the play-house and if she finds you here, she will get the swatter and you will all be sorry!"

Still, the three flies did not leave, so Percy, the policeman, had to open the door and shoo them out with Marcella's hanky.

Before Percy had time to pull the curtain over the door again, he heard a noise. "My!" he thought as he fell to the floor and lay very still, "What if Marcella has tip-toed up beside the play-house and heard us dolls talking! What will she think?" Dolls are very cautious when any real-for-sure person is about. So Percy did not move even a speck. None of the other dolls moved, either.

But it was not Marcella returning. It was a cunning little white puppy dog with a black nose. He came running right into the play-house and sat down in a corner behind the stove.

Percy, the policeman, did not move so much as a rag finger when the little white puppy dog with the black nose stepped upon him.

One of the puppy dog's feet stepped right on Percy's face and mashed his cloth nose flat, but as soon as the puppy dog raised his foot and went on, Percy's nose raised right up again and was as good as ever.

The little dog got as far back into the corner of the play-house as he could and shivered so hard it made the play-house shake.

Beloved Belindy peeped out of the side window towards the house, and saw Marcella getting into the car with her Mamma.

"I guess we won't have our medicine today!" Beloved Belindy thought, 'way back inside her cotton-stuffed head. But she didn't say so out loud. Instead, Beloved Belindy turned and looked at the puppy dog shivering in the corner.

"Don't you know it is only pretend snow?" she asked the puppy dog.

The puppy dog rolled his eyes at Beloved Belindy and shivered again.

"The snow is only apple blossoms," Beloved Belindy continued. "Mary Katherine just plays it is snow so that she can give us medicine for the 'influence' and colds and everything. It really isn't cold, so you needn't shiver!"

"No indeed!" Percy, the policeman, said, as he got to his feet. "Why do you shiver, nice puppy dog?"

The little white puppy dog thumped the floor of the play-house with his tail and shivered again. "I do not shiver because I am cold!" he said in a soft little whispery puppy dog voice. "I shiver every time I think of the adventure I have just had!"

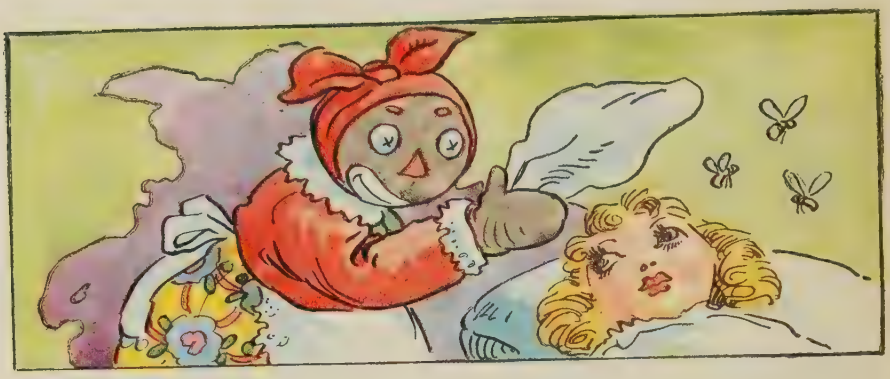
"Dear me!" Beloved Belindy said, "I thought puppy dogs always had nice adventures!"

"We do when we are chasing cats and playing," the puppy dog replied. "But it isn't a nice adventure when two mean boys catch you and tie something rattley and noisy to your tail! Did you ever have two mean boys tie a tin can to your tail?" the puppy dog asked Beloved Belindy and Percy.

Beloved Belindy and Percy both laughed and replied "No! We have never had that done to us! 'Cause why? 'Cause we haven't any tails. We are dolls, you know!"

"That's so!" the puppy dog said, and he came out of the corner and looked closer at Percy and Beloved Belindy. "It would be fun shaking you up, I'll bet!" he said, half to himself.

"It wouldn't hurt us!" Beloved Belindy told the puppy dog. "But if you should shake us up, you would probably tear our clothes and then Marcella would feel very sorry!



She is our Mamma!" Beloved Belindy explained. "Just our pretend Mamma, not our real Mamma."

"Who is your real Mamma?" the puppy dog asked.

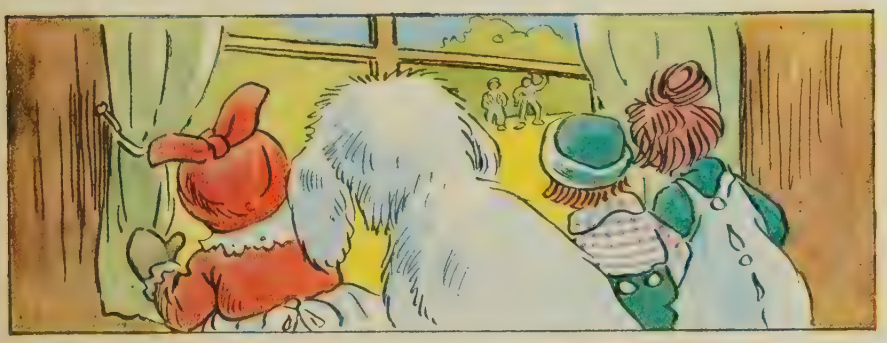
"Santa Claus, I guess!" Beloved Belindy replied.

"Are these other dolls alive, too?" the puppy dog asked as he looked at Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy and Sarah and Rosie and Cleety, the clown, lying in the toy bed.

"Oh yes!" Beloved Belindy answered, "Marcella went into the house to get some sugar and water to make medicine with and I 'spect her mother took her down town! When Marcella is around, we never move, or talk, or do anything."

"Here Rover! Here Rover! Here Rover!" two loud voices outside called and, looking out of the window, Beloved Belindy and Percy and the puppy dog saw two boys.

"It's the mean boys, who tied the can to my tail!" the



puppy dog said. "They're coming this way! Where can I hide?"

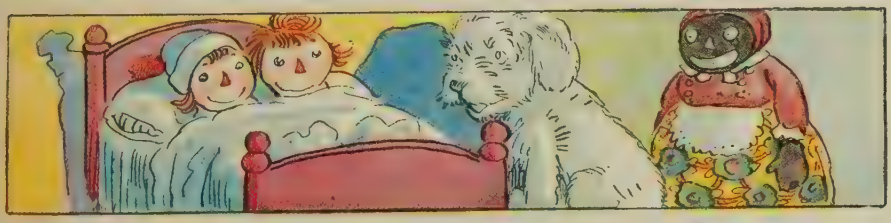
"You must hide in back of the toy piano!" Beloved Belindy whispered to the puppy dog. So the puppy dog hid behind the toy piano and Percy, the policeman. Beloved Belindy threw the bed-clothes over him so that he was completely hidden.

When the two mean boys pulled the curtain aside and looked into the play-house, Beloved Belindy and the other dolls were very still.

"He isn't in here!" one of the boys said. "But here is a rag doll. We can have lots of fun throwing her way up in the air and hitting her with a stick when she comes down!"

"Dear me!" Beloved Belindy thought to herself as the mean boy picked her up, "if they hit me with sticks, that will tear my pretty dress! Dear me!"

But of course, there was nothing Beloved Belindy could do, for she did not wish such bad boys to know that dolls really and truly are alive, so she didn't wiggle, or twist, or kick as she could have done if she had wished.



The boy threw Beloved Belindy high in the air, making her turn over and over in a comical manner. This was really fun for Beloved Belindy, for it felt just like going down in a fast elevator. But she held her breath expecting to be cracked hard with the stick when she came down. The boy tried to hit her with the stick, but he missed.

He threw Beloved Belindy high in the air again, just as Marcella and her mamma drove into the yard.

Marcella gave a cry when she saw what the bad boy was doing and started running towards him.

But before Mary Katherine and her mamma had taken three steps, something white with a little black nose came bouncing out of the play-house, dragging the bed clothes with him.

It was the brave little puppy dog. He had shivered inside the play-house hidden behind the toy piano until he could stand it no longer. "Beloved Belindy was very kind to me," he thought, "so I shall not let those bad boys tear her pretty clothes by hitting her with a stick!"

Out of the play-house he came, barking as loudly as he could, and if the two bad boys had not dropped their sticks and climbed over the fence, the brave little puppy dog would have nipped their heels.

When the brave little puppy dog had chased the mean boys to the fence, he ran back and picked up Beloved Belindy and carried her to Marcella.

Marcella did not know the puppy dog was talking to her, but this is what he said in puppy language, "I'm glad the mean boys did not tear Beloved Belindy's nice, pretty dress!" and he wagged his tail so fast it looked as though it would fall off.

"Thank you, nice white puppy dog!" Marcella said. She hugged Beloved Belindy and patted the puppy dog's head.

"Do you 'spect we can keep the little white puppy dog, Mamma? He looks like he is lost, and I am sure he doesn't belong to anyone?"

"We can keep him until someone comes to claim him!" Marcella's kind mamma replied.

So Marcella named the brave little white puppy dog "Hairy" because he had such scraggly white hair all over his little body. And in a few minutes "Hairy" was sitting near the little toy table with Marcella and all the dolls around, enjoying his new found friends and the lovely tea-party. And after the tea-party, Hairy washed the faces of all the dolls nice and clean, where the sweetened water had spilt upon them.

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CHAPTER THREE

ONE night, when all the folks had gone from home and the dolls all knew that they could race and romp about the house as much as they pleased, Beloved Belindy said to the other dolls, "Let's have a game of some sort!"

Of course, this was just what Cleety, the clown, and Percy, the policeman, and all the other dolls wished. "What shall we play, Beloved Belindy?" they asked.

"Hmm! Let's see!" Beloved Belindy mused. She pressed her rag forehead into a lot of wrinkles so she could think better. "Shall we slide down the stairs, Cleety?" she asked after thinking ever so long.

"That is always lots of fun for some of us!" Cleety, the clown, agreed. "But Sarah and Rosie can't do that, for they have china heads, and everyone knows china heads are easily broken!"

"We must not slide downstairs!" Rosie and Sarah both cried, "for it isn't fair to our little mistress if we break our china heads! If we tumble about and get broken, our little mistress would think that she did it some way, for she never suspects that we dolls do anything except lie still wherever she puts us!"

"That is quite true!" Percy, the policeman, agreed. "Neither Mistress, or her Mama, or Daddy believe dolls laugh and talk and have fun when no one is watching them. So we must never break Sarah's, or Rosie's china heads, if we can help it!"

"Dear me, no!" Beloved Belindy agreed. "And we must think up something else to play! Can't you think of something, Cleety?" she asked as she put her rag arm about Sarah's china neck.

"Rosie and I can watch the rest of you slide down stairs," Sarah laughed. "We enjoy seeing you have fun whether we can share it or not!"

"Sarah and I can be the watchmen at the bottom of the stairs!" Rosie said. "And we can give prizes to the ones who slide downstairs the fastest!"

"That will be fun!" Sarah cried. "I still have the little paper tickets I had for the umbrella merry-go-round. They are under the toy piano." And she ran and brought them out. "Now I'll tell you what we can do! Rosie and I can be the ones to give the prizes. And each prize will be a ticket. One of us can stand at the head of the stairs and the other can stand at the bottom of the stairs. Then the first doll downstairs gets a ticket. Then all the dolls must run back upstairs, and the first one up will get a ticket."

"I'll stay upstairs and hand out the tickets," Rosie laughed.

"And I'll stand at bottom," Sarah agreed. "Then when all the dolls have a whole lot of tickets, they must take the other dolls to some 'pretend' place where we can have ice-cream sodas and lolly-pops and ice-cream cones!"

"That will be fun!" Cleety, the clown, said. "We can pretend that the ones with the tickets treat the others to goodies!"

"That way, we'll all really win the tickets!" Beloved Belindy laughed.

So Sarah walked carefully downstairs so she would not

slip and crack her lovely china head, while Rosie stood at the top of the stairs and made the other dolls line up back in the nursery. Then when she saw that Sarah had reached the bottom, she called to the dolls, "Are you all ready?"

"All ready!" the dolls cried in answer. "Then one, two, three, GO!" Rosie cried and the dolls all ran towards the head of the stairs, threw their feet out in front of them, and went tumbling head over heels to the bottom.

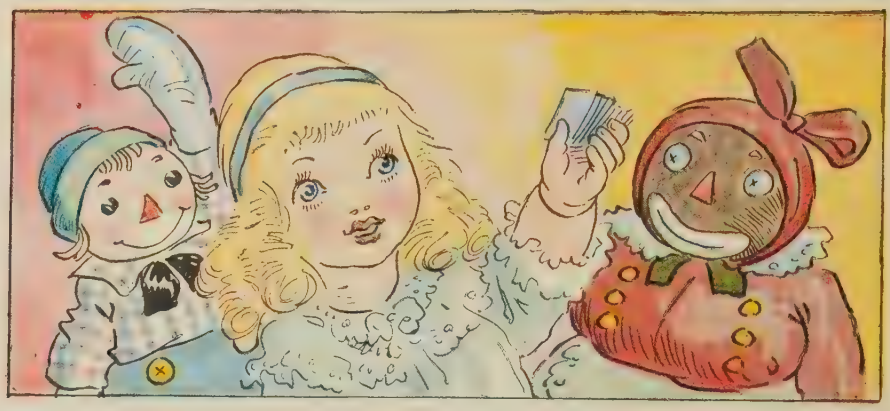
They made a lot of noise. Cleety, the clown, was made of wood and so was Quacky Doodles, the duck, and, as they bounced from one step to another, their wooden heads and feet went "floppity, bump, bang, blump!" And of course, every doll, even Rosie and Sarah, screamed and laughed as loudly as they could, for it did not hurt them at all. It was much the same as when you or I ride upon the great big roller coaster, out at one of the amusement parks.

Quacky Doodles was the first one down, because she was almost round, and sometimes bounced three steps at a time. But when the dolls all piled up in a heap at the bottom of the stairs against the wall, Quacky Doodles was down beneath the rest. And, as Beloved Belindy was the last doll to reach the bottom of the stairs, she was the doll on top of all the rest, so she jumped up and was three steps ahead before the other dolls could get to their feet. So Beloved Belindy received a ticket at the top of the stairs while Quacky Doodles received the one at the bottom.

The dolls played this until all of the tickets had been used up, so Sarah and Rosie told them the game was finished. "Now we must run to the soda-water place and be treated to goodies!"

"Where had we better pretend the soda fountain shall be?" Beloved Belindy asked.

"Oh I know!" Cleety, the clown cried. "Out in the kitchen! We can climb up to the kitchen sink and I will be the soda-water man and make the ice-cream sodas for you. The draining board can be the ice-cream parlor and we can



use cups for chairs, and a saucer on top of another cup for the table!"

All the dolls thought this would be very nice, so they all went scampering to the kitchen. Even the little horse climbed out of the toy box and joined them. When they reached the kitchen, they found that Dinah, the cook, had washed up all the toy cups and saucers and there they were right upon the draining board just as if they had been brought there especially for the dolls' game. So Cleety and Percy, the policeman, climbed up into the cupboard and handed down the large tea-cups and saucers for the chairs and tables.

When everything was nicely arranged and the dolls were seated upon the tea-cup chairs, Cleety, the clown, said, "Now I will be the soda man and will make the sodas of any flavor you wish!"

So he hopped into the sink and turned on the cold water faucet quite easily. "Whee!" Beloved Belindy cried, "it sizzles and tinkles just like a real-for-sure soda-water fountain!"

"Now if Percy will hand me the cups, I will fill them with soda-water!" Cleety cried.

Percy, the policeman, handed Cleety, the clown, the little tea-cups. "Oh, wait a minute, Cleety," he said, "I've just thought of something." And he asked Beloved Belindy

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to give him a boost up into the cupboard and presently came down with a box of sugar.

"We may as well have the soda-water taste nice and sweet!"

All the dolls liked sweetened water. Lots and lots of times, their little mistress played tea-party with them and gave them small tastes of the tea. Of course, the tea was only plain water with sugar in it, but that is quite nice if you can pretend well. So Cleety put a little sugar into each tiny tea-cup and let the cold water sizzle into it.

"If it would only foam like real-for-sure soda-water, wouldn't it be lovely?" Beloved Belindy said.

"Yesterday, when I went riding with the folks, they stopped at a real-for-sure soda-water place and mistress gave me two or three tastes of the ice-cream from her soda!"

And, in fact, as the other dolls looked at Beloved Belindy, they could see the traces of ice-cream upon her face. Mistress had forgotten to wash it off and it had dried and left a white place.

"It tasted so good!" Beloved Belindy laughed. "Though I'm sure Mistress did not know that I could really taste it!"

"I wish we did have some real-for-sure ice-cream!" Sarah said. "I had some, one day, and I could taste it for two days. Then Fido Puppydog came along and licked it all from my face!"

"I remember your face was very clean after that!" Percy, the policeman laughed.

"See how you like these sodas!" Cleety, the clown said. He handed Percy the little toy cups filled with sweetened water.

"OOOH! They are fine!" all the dolls cried after they had tasted the pretend sodas.

"While you are drinking those, I will find some ice-cream!" Cleety said. He stood quite still and struck his wooden head with his wooden hand.

"Ah!" he said, "I know! We can put flour in for ice-cream!"

He jumped from the draining board to the floor, his wooden feet hitting with a loud thump and, after he had stopped tumbling, he opened the flour bin.

The flour bin was hinged at the bottom so that it tilted out from the top and it was filled with nice soft white fluffy flour.

Cleety, the clown, climbed back to the draining board and filled a large tea-cup with flour.

After that, Cleety put flour into every cup of soda-water and, with the sugar, it made the pretended soda-water taste very, very good to the dolls.

Sarah and Rosie had pretty mouths which were partly opened. It was easy for them to tip up the toy tea-cups and let the soda-water run into their mouths, but Beloved Belindy and Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy and Percy the policeman, and Quacky Doodles could not do this. Quacky Doodles had a mouth, but that was all. So, when she poured the soda-water into her mouth, it ran right out at the back and down over her neck and painted body. Beloved Belindy and Percy, the policeman, only had painted mouths, so they tipped their cups against their faces and let the sweetened water and flour soak in as best it could.

And as Cleety, the clown, handed out sodas very fast, in a few minutes Beloved Belindy and Percy were soaking wet all around their faces and necks. And Cleety, the clown, standing in the sink, was all splashed with the water from the "pretend"

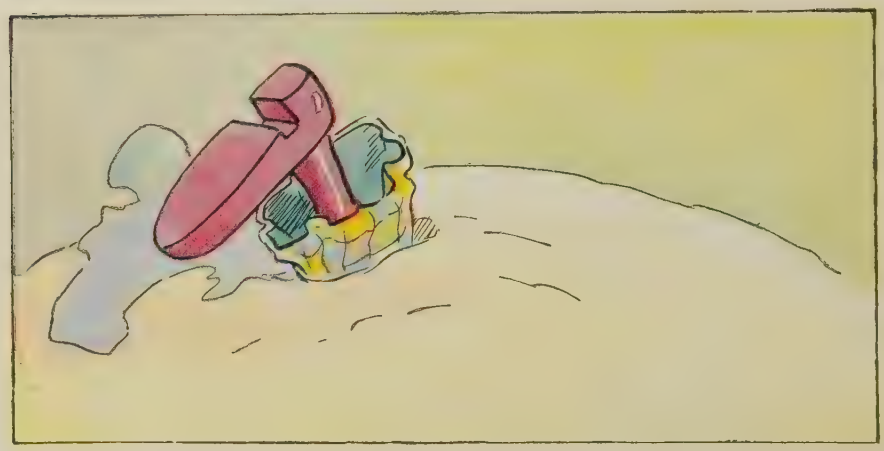
soda fountain and, while it would not harm his wooden body, it did get his clown suit wringing wet.

All the tickets had been used up in paying for the sodas, and Beloved Belindy was saying, "Now we must wash and wipe all the cups and saucers and clean up the muss we have made!" when the door bell rang.

With one accord every doll jumped from the draining board and raced upstairs. All except Cleety, the clown. When Cleety, the clown, climbed from the sink to the draining board, he thought, "I will save time and slide across and tumble to the floor!" So he slid, instead of getting to his feet and running and jumping. And when he slid from the draining board, he slid, head first, right into the flour-bin and stuck there with only one wooden foot showing above the top of the flour.

Cleety wiggled and kicked to get right side up, but it was no use, so he gave up and kept still.

The dolls, racing to the stairway, could see that whoever had rung the door-bell was going down the front steps, so they stopped. "It wasn't anyone who will bother us!" Beloved Belindy laughed. "My! I thought it was the folks returning. You know, they let mistress ring the bell just



for fun when they return home. Now we must go back to the kitchen and do the work!"

"Where's Cleety?" Percy, the policeman, asked, when they reached the kitchen. "He isn't with us!"

But when the dolls climbed to the draining board they discovered Cleety's foot sticking up from the flour. It took them all to pull him out, and he was a sight. His wet clothes and head were a mass of dough.

"Subbah glubbah mumble!" Cleety said, through the coating of dough about his head. All the dolls laughed at the way Cleety tried to talk. But Beloved Belindy knew just what to do. She held Cleety under the soda-water

faucet and scrubbed him good until all the flour and dough had been washed from his wooden body and clown suit. Then Beloved Belindy took her apron and washed all the floury soda-water from the other dolls. Then she washed the tea-cups while the other dolls dried them and piled them up as they had been before.

When everything had been put in order and things were as nice and clean as when the dolls first entered the kitchen, Beloved Belindy said, "Now we must all go up to the nursery and sit upon the radiator until we get nice and dry! For it would never do for Mistress to return and find us in this condition!"

So the dolls closed the flour-bin and all went upstairs to the nursery and sat upon the warm radiators until they were nice and dry.

And when Dinah, the cook, went to make biscuits for breakfast, the next morning, and scooped out a sifter of flour, she had to laugh to herself, "Now how in the wurl dat ole Cleety clown hat git in mah flour-bin? Dat's what I lak to know! I spect dey's goin' on 'round here when de folks ain't home. Yes indeedy, dat's what!"

And she shook her head knowingly and winked at Cleety's clown hat.

CHAPTER FOUR

"WHAT do you think?" Beloved Belindy asked, as she ran up the steps and into the nursery.

"We don't know what to think, Beloved Belindy!" the dolls all replied, "Please tell us just what to think!"

Beloved Belindy gave her cotton-stuffed body a few pats as if she were trying to catch her breath after running up stairs. "I went down into the pantry, as you know, to get some sugar and crackers so that we dolls could have a lovely tea-party. And as I walked by a door at the bottom of the cupboard, I heard something squeaking just as if it were crying. So I ran right upstairs again to tell you!"

"What do you 'spect it can be—squeaking as if it was crying, Beloved Belindy?" Sarah, the yellow-haired doll, asked.

"I can't imagine what it is!" Beloved Belindy replied. "All the folks have gone away—even Dinah, the cook. And the door at the bottom of the cupboard is quite small and it could not be Puppy dog Hairy!"

"No! It is not puppy dog Hairy," Percy, the policeman doll said, "'cause I know that puppy dog Hairy went with the folks when they left in the car two hours ago."

"I 'spect we had all better run down and see what it is!" Beloved Belindy said, after a long time of thinking.

All the dolls were eager to find out what Beloved Belindy had heard, so they asked her to lead the way.

It is much easier, if one is a rag doll, stuffed with clean white cotton, to tumble downstairs than it is to run down. Because the steps are so high it takes lots longer to jump from one to another. So, when Beloved Belindy reached the top step, instead of jumping from one step to another, she gave a jump and went tumbling, head-over-heels, BLUMPITY BLUMP, clear to the bottom of the stairway. My, how she bounced!

were crying in a very teeny-weeny squeaky voice. So Percy, the policeman, opened the door and all the dolls could look inside the bottom of the cupboard. It was hard to see anything at first because it was quite dark inside, but presently Beloved Belindy could see a queer square thing made out of wire and in it, a little dark object.

Beloved Belindy went into the cupboard and pulled the little square object out so all the dolls could see. And, as the square object made of wire came into view, all the dolls cried, "OOOOH!"

A little teeny weeny grey mouse sat huddled in one corner of the wire box and her little tail wiggled about. She was so afraid!

"Dear Me!" Beloved Belindy said in her kindliest voice. "What are you doing inside this queer wire box, little mouse?"

The little teeny weeny grey mousie wiped her eyes with her tiny paw and said, "When I walked into this wire box the door was opened wide and there was the nicest piece of cheese lying in the center on a cunning little table. But do you know? As soon as I took one little tiny bite of the cheese, the wind blew the door shut with a loud Crack! and I can't open it again!"

"Hmm!" Beloved Belindy mused. She rubbed her chin with her rag hand, "I 'spect this is a trap! That's what I 'spect, Missus Mousie!"

"I 'spect so, too!" Mousie agreed. She began crying again in her squeaky teeny-weeny voice. "I told Maurice Mouse that we should stay out in the garden under the large white stone where we have always lived. But he thought it would be much nicer if we moved into the house. So he found a little crack and spent every night for two weeks, chewing at the edge of the crack until the hole was large enough for us to walk through easily! Then we moved all our furniture in. Baby crib and everything. It is surprising how many things we had to move.

"It took us two nights to get comfortably fixed. And

last night, I came in here and smelled the cheese in this trap and walked right in. Now I am caught and shall never see my dear little baby, Matilda Mousie, again! Oh Dear! Oh Dear! Oh Dear!" And the poor little mamma mousie began squeaking again as if her teeny mouse heart would break.

Of course, everyone of the dolls felt very, very sorry for Mamma Mousie, but none of them seemed to know what to do.

"If the folks return and find Mamma Mousie here, I am sure Dinah, the cook, would give Mamma Mousie to Hairy Puppydog to play with and he is very rough!" Beloved Belindy said.

Just then Maurice Mousie peeped out from behind a box in the corner of the cupboard and Mamma Mouse called to him.

"Now just see!" Mamma Mouse told Maurice Mousie. "Now just see where I am! Caught in a wicked trap and I know that I shall never get out again!"

"You'd better get out and hurry home," Maurice Mousie said in rather a frightened tone. "Cause Matilda Mousie is crying as hard as she can and I can't seem to do a thing with her! I think she has the colic, maybe!"

"There! You see!" Poor little teeny weeny mamma Mousie cried, and she burst into her squeaky crying again. "Now what shall I do? What shall I do?"

"We must open the trap!" Percy, the policeman, said, very decidedly, as he walked up to the trap door.

"Just one moment, Percy Policeman!" Beloved Belindy said. "I wish to talk with Mr. Maurice Mousie before you open the door. Come here, Maurice Mousie!"

Maurice Mousie did not like to venture out at first, but after awhile he came and sat beside Beloved Belindy.

"Now I wish to tell you something, Mr. Maurice Mousie," said Beloved Belindy in her quiet, soft cottony voice. "You wished to move from your nice garden home into the house

and because you were dissatisfied, it has led Mamma Mousie into trouble. Now if we open the trap door and let Mamma Mousie out, will you promise to move back out to the garden home again?"

"You bet!" Mr. Maurice Mousie agreed. "If you will just let Mamma out so that she can run home and quiet little Matilda Mousie, I will promise to start moving right away!"

"You see," Beloved Belindy explained to both Mamma and Daddy Mousie, "The folks living in this large house buy their food to eat, and if you mice come into the pantries and cupboards and nibble here and there at things, Dinah the cook, becomes very angry. And that is why she has set the trap and has caught Mamma Mousie! One of you must have nibbled on some of Dinah's cakes, or cookies, and she has noticed it!"

"I'll never nibble on any food inside a large house again!" Mamma Mousie sighed, "If I can just get out of this trap!"

"All right then!" Beloved Belindy said, and she and Percy, the policeman, opened the trap-door and let Mamma Mousie run out.

Mamma Mousie was so very glad to get out! She ran and put her arms around Beloved Belindy's rag hand and squeezed it as hard as she could.

"Thank you so much!" Mamma Mousie said.

"Now Maurice Mousie," she said to Daddy Mousie, "you start moving while I run and get little teeny weeny Matilda Mousie and show her to all these lovely dolls!"

So Maurice and Mamma Mousie ran down into a hole in the dark corner of the cupboard while the dolls all waited.

Presently Mamma Mousie came up carrying the cutest little weeny teeny baby mousie you could ever wish to see.

"This is little Matilda Mousie!" Mamma Mousie said, and she held up the baby.

Little teeny weeny Matilda Mousie had a little pink nose and kept one little pink thumb in her mouth.

"Did little Matilda have the colic, Mamma Mousie?" Beloved Belindy asked.

"My land sakes, no!" Mamma Mousie laughed, "She just wanted her bottle, but you know how Daddies are! They never seem to know just what to do for babies! Maurice Mousie is heating her bottle and – here he comes now!"

All the dolls crowded around and watched little Matilda Mousie drink her tiny bottle of milk and go to sleep. Then Mamma Mousie thanked the dolls again and asked them to come and visit them some day out in the garden.

Then, humming a soft little cuddley Mousie song, Mamma Mousie carried little pink-nosed Matilda Mousie down into their home, where Daddy Mousie was busy packing things and getting ready to move.

When Dinah, the cook, came home, that evening, and saw the mouse trap out in the center of the pantry floor, she scratched her head in a confused way and wondered what she had been thinking of to place it there instead of inside the bottom door of the cupboard. And, unless she reads this, I doubt if she will ever know just what happened that day.

CHAPTER FIVE

ONE day, Daddy brought home a large package and unwrapped it up in the nursery. Marcella sat upon the floor with all the dolls placed around her so that they might see what Daddy was unwrapping.

There was Beloved Belindy, Cleety, the clown, Percy, the policeman, Sarah and Rosie, and Raggedy Ann and Andy.

Marcella could not sit still, she was so excited, and more than once she upset Cleety, so that he toppled over and his wooden head hit the floor with a sharp "CLICK."

Marcella straightened Cleety each time and said, "Dear me, Cleety! Please sit still and do not be so impatient! Daddy is working just as fast as he can!"

Daddy had to smile to himself and wink one eye at Beloved Belindy, for he saw that Cleety as well as all the rest of the dolls were very, very patient and had not wiggled or twisted even once.

Pretty soon the package was undone and out came a very lovely wooden thing, beautifully carved with oak leaves and acorns.

And at the front of the beautifully carved box was a dial with two little white hands pointing at the numbers.

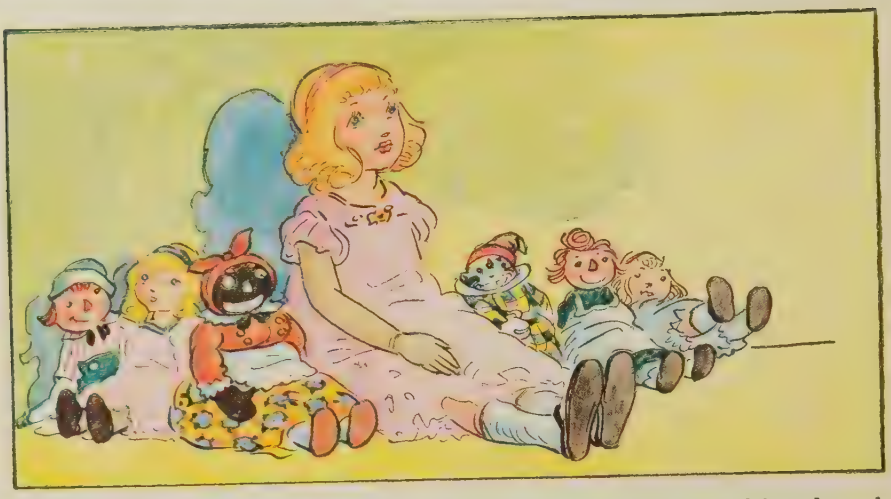
"Oh!" Marcella cried, clapping her hands together and upsetting Cleety again, "It's a beautiful clock! How nice!"

"Yes!" Daddy said, "it is a coo-coo clock! Just as soon as I hang it up, I will set it at the right time, then you can all sit here and watch it until it strikes!"

So Daddy hung it up on the wall, and underneath he attached a pendulum which swung back and forth, "Click-Click-Click."

There were two large weights, shaped like pine cones, which hung on two chains. When these weights were pulled up high, the pendulum swung merrily, back and forth.

"Let's see," Daddy said, as he pulled out his watch, "It



is three minutes of six!" He pushed the little white hand around the dial until the smaller hand pointed to six and the larger hand pointed almost to twelve.

"See?" Daddy said. "That means it is three minutes before six o'clock. Now watch carefully and you will have a surprise!"

"How long do we have to wait, Daddy?" Marcella asked.

"Just two and one-half minutes now!" Daddy replied.

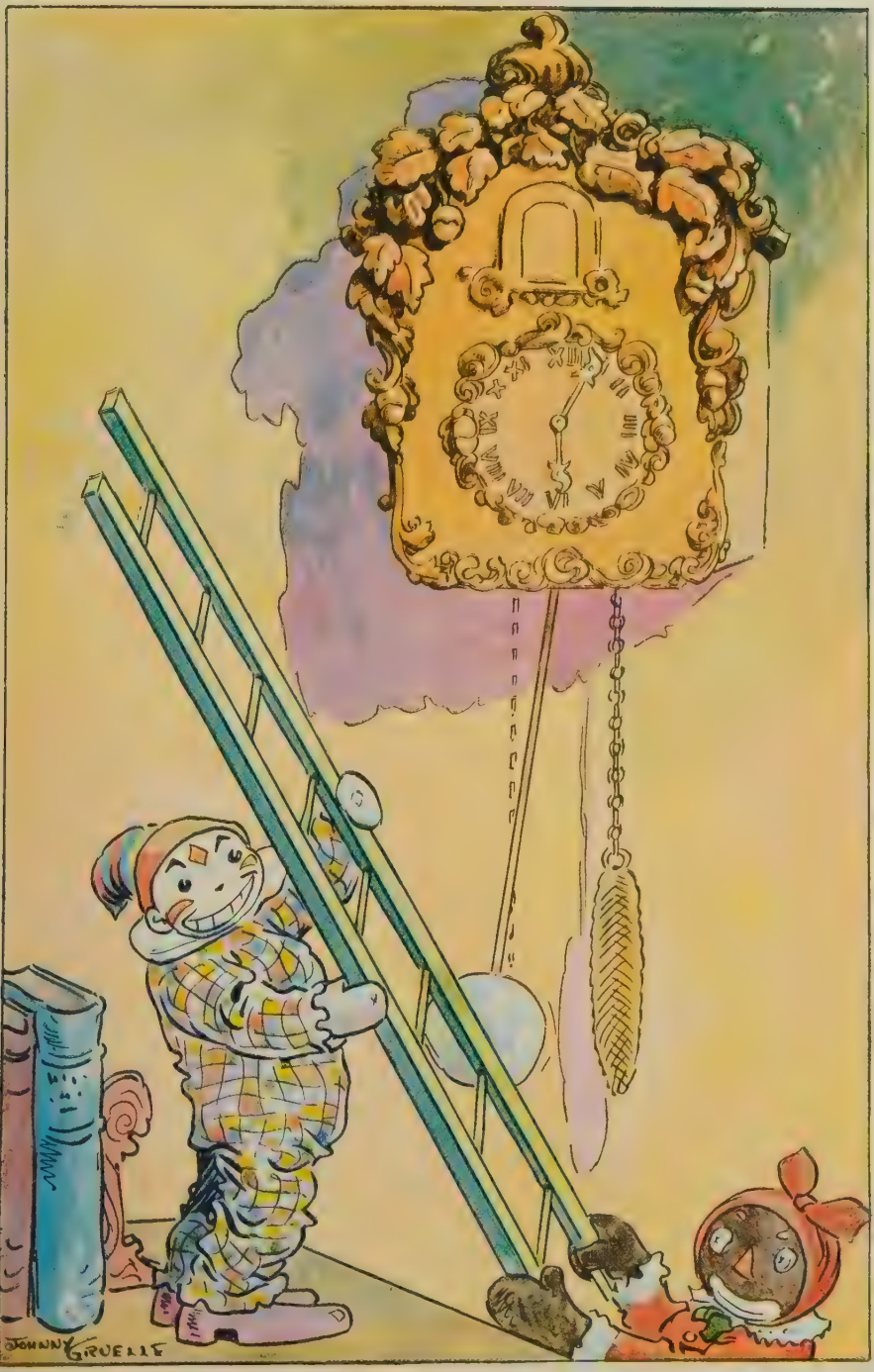
"Then you must be very patient, Cleety and Percy!" Marcella said.

"Daddy, couldn't you push the larger hand just a little faster please?" Daddy chuckled and winked again at Beloved Belindy as he took her from Marcella's lap. "We will let Beloved Belindy push the minute hand ahead!" he said.

"Now watch, Beloved Belindy," he added, "I 'spect you will be very much surprised!"

So Daddy took Beloved Belindy's rag hand and with it, he pushed the larger hand until it pointed right at the number twelve.

For just a second, nothing happened, then suddenly, a little door at the top of the clock flew open and a little wooden bird swung out. It opened its wooden mouth and fluttered


JOHNNY GRUELLE

its wooden wings. In a tiny, musical tone it cried, "Coo-coo, coo-coo, coo-coo, coo-coo, coo-coo, coo-coo." Then the little wooden bird swung back into the doorway and the little wooden door closed with a click.

"There!" Daddy said. "What do you think of that, Beloved Belindy?"

Beloved Belindy would have liked to reply, but she did not. She simply smiled the broad, pleasant smile which was painted upon her black face and thought very silently, 'way back in her cotton-stuffed head.

All the dolls remained very quiet, too. But that is the way with dolls when real-for-sure people are about, no matter how pleased they may be.

But Marcella clapped her pretty hands and cried, "We must do it all over again, Daddy. The little wooden bird was so cunning!"

And Daddy, because he was a nice Daddy and knew how pleased little folks can be over new presents, took each of the dolls in turn, Cleety, the clown, Percy, the policeman, Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy, Sarah and Rosie, and with their hands, pushed the large hand of the clock all around the dial, until the little wooden bird swung out of the little door and coo-coo-ed and coo-coo-ed until at last it would not coo-coo at all.

"Dear me!" Daddy said. He opened the little door and looked inside. "I heard something snap in there, but it is so dark inside, I can't see a thing. We will let it go until morning, then I will take it back to the jeweler's and have it fixed."

Just then Dinah rang the dinner bell. So the dolls were placed where they could watch the pretty new coo-coo clock while Marcella went down for her dinner.

There the dolls sat and watched and watched. And, when Marcella and Daddy were downstairs and the dolls knew they would not be disturbed, Beloved Belindy turned to the other dolls and asked, "Isn't it just the nicest new present for the nursery?"

And all the dolls hastened to reply, "Indeed it is, Beloved Belindy! Just think how cheery it will be, all day long and all night long as each hour comes, to have the little door fly open and the pretty little wooden bird swing out and cry 'Coo-Coo.' "

"But now the little bird is broken, Beloved Belindy!" Cleety said. "Marcella's nice Daddy said so and I heard something inside the coo-coo clock snap as if something had broken!"

"That is so!" Beloved Belindy agreed, "I heard the snap, too, Cleety!"

"Well!" Percy, the policeman said, "We will have to be satisfied tonight with just sitting here, watching the pretty coo-coo clock. But I do wish the little bird would come out with his cheery cry at each hour, tonight!"

"So do I," Sarah and Rosie and Cleety and Beloved Belindy all said together. "Maybe Marcella's nice Daddy will have it fixed tonight!" Sarah said.

Marcella had just asked Daddy the same thing, "Can't you have the coo-coo clock fixed tonight, Daddy? Mamma hasn't heard it, neither has Dinah and neither has Fido puppy dog!"

"The jeweler has closed his shop for the night!" Daddy answered, "I will have it fixed the first thing in the morning, though, and have it sent right straight home!"

Now, while Marcella and her Daddy were talking, Beloved Belindy and the other dolls up in the nursery, sitting and looking at the new coo-coo clock were thinking and thinking as hard as they knew how. And that was quite hard, you may be sure.

Finally Beloved Belindy jumped to her feet, "Cleety!" she cried, "you are made of wood. Maybe if you talk to the little wooden bird in wooden language, he can tell us what snapped inside the clock!"

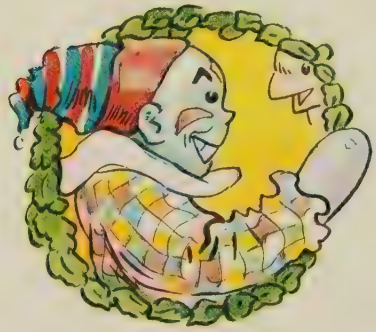
So Cleety, the clown, ran to the toy box and came running back with his wooden ladder. He placed this against the

wall and climbed to a table. Then he pulled the ladder to the table and leaned it against the wall. This put Cleety high enough so that he could reach up and knock with his wooden hand upon the little door in the coo-coo clock.

Nothing happened, so Cleety knocked again, "Tap, Tap!"

"Maybe the little wooden coo-coo bird thinks it is a real for sure person, Cleety!" Beloved Belindy said. "Speak to him in wooden talk, then he may come out!"

So Cleety spoke to the little wooden coo-coo bird in wooden language, and tapped his wooden hand upon the little door.



As soon as he said, "Come out, little wooden coo-coo bird!" the little door swung open and the little bird said, "I can't, Cleety! I heard you all talking down there and can understand every word you say. So it is not necessary for us to talk wooden language!"

So Cleety and the little coo-coo bird talked just like all the dolls. "You see!" the little coo-coo bird said, "that is," he laughed in a wooden voice, "you can't see, for it is dark inside the clock. But I am used to it, and I can see, that the little peg which catches in the wheel which makes me swing out and cry 'Coo-Coo' has slipped out of its slot!"

"Could I fix it, I wonder?" Cleety asked.

"Oh yes, Cleety! Do fix it!" all the dolls cried.

"Boost me up the table leg!" Beloved Belindy said.

So Raggedy Andy boosted Beloved Belindy up the table leg and Cleety, the clown, pulled her up the rest of the way.

"Let me see, Cleety!" Beloved Belindy said. "I have wonderful eyes, nice pearl button eyes, and I can see even in the darkest place!"

So Beloved Belindy climbed the ladder and peeked into the little door. Just in back of the cunning little wooden coo-coo bird, Beloved Belindy could see the wooden peg which had snapped out of place.

"I do believe I can punch it back in place!" Beloved Belindy said to Cleety, "if you will hand me that lead pencil."

Cleety handed Beloved Belindy the lead pencil and at the first punch, the wooden peg snapped back in place and the door flew shut, then open again and the wooden bird cried, "Coo-Coo," seven times.

"Oh listen, Daddy!" Marcella cried from downstairs, "the coo-coo clock has fixed itself! The coo-coo clock has fixed itself! Goody! I will run right up and see it!"

"Oh no!" Daddy said, pleasantly, but firmly, "Just finish your dinner, then run up!"

And it was a mighty good thing that Daddy insisted upon this, for at Marcella's first glad cry, Cleety had jumped from the table with the wooden ladder and had run with it to the toy box, placed it inside and run back to where he had

been sitting when Marcella had gone downstairs to dinner. So, if Marcella had run up to the nursery as she wished to do, Cleety would hardly have had time to do all this.

And after that, at each hour of the day, and each hour of the night, the little wooden bird came out of the clock and sang his cheery coo-coo song.

And if there were no real-for-sure people about to listen, the little wooden coo-coo bird, after he had cried coo-coo at the hour, often stayed outside and visited with the dolls in the nursery.

For wooden coo-coo birds are as much alive as dolls. If they were not, how would they know how to count their coo-coos to match the number the small hand points to?

Just answer that, please.

CHAPTER SIX

BELOVED BELINDY sat way back in the end of a barrel out in the orchard. No one would think of looking back in the barrel to find her. So, for a long time, Beloved Belindy was lost.

Beloved Belindy did not mind being lost, though she wondered why her little mistress did not come and get her.

Marcella had put Beloved Belindy way back in the barrel when it had started to rain and then Marcella had forgotten where she had put Beloved Belindy.

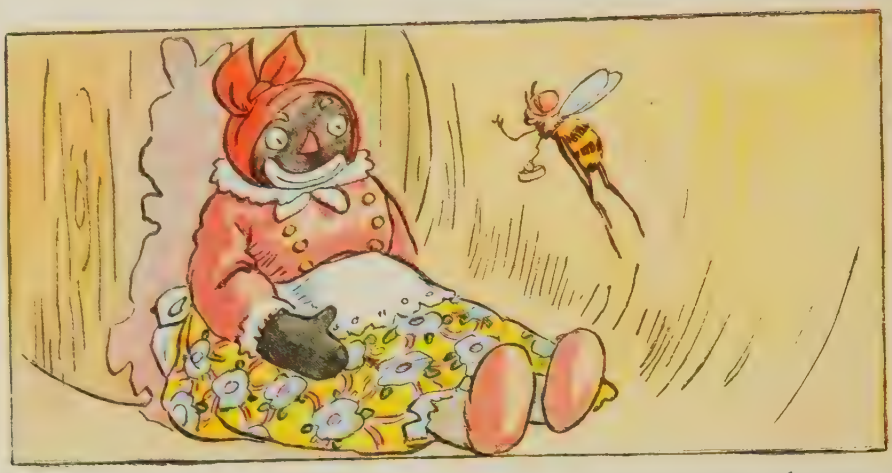
So Beloved Belindy sat at the far end of the barrel and looked out across the orchard. She did not grow lonesome, for there were always very pleasant thoughts running through Beloved Belindy's soft rag head. And her little pearl button eyes twinkled as much as pearl button eyes can twinkle, whenever anything interesting happened out in front of the barrel.

She could sit back there and watch the honey bees as they came to a clump of pretty flowers. She watched them gather the honey and fly away. Once a large bumble bee flew inside the barrel and sounded very loud as he buzzed around and looked at Beloved Belindy.

Beloved Belindy watched Hennypenny, a large fat hen, look carefully all about to see if she were watched, then run down the path and disappear into a patch of black berry bushes.

"Now then!" Beloved Belindy mused to herself, "I wonder what dear old fat Hennypenny is up to?" But as Mrs. Hennypenny did not return to answer, Beloved Belindy thought to herself, "I 'spect, if I wish to find out, I must run down to the blackberry bushes and see for myself!"

So, very cautiously, for she did not wish any real-for-sure people to see her, Beloved Belindy crawled upon her hands and knees and peeped out of the open end of the barrel. Not a soul was in sight. But, to make certain, Beloved Belindy



climbed to the top of the barrel so that she could see better.

"I 'spect everyone has gone away for the day!" she said out loud.

So down to the ground she jumped, and her little fat wobbly rag legs went ever so fast as she ran down the path Mrs. Hennypenny had gone. When she came to the blackberry patch, Beloved Belindy peeped through the branches. It was hard to discover Mrs. Hennypenny, for the old fat hen had huddled way back close to the fence and the leaves were very thick.

But Beloved Belindy's pearl button eyes could see very well and she soon saw Mrs. Hennypenny's brown eye winking at her.

"I'm coming in!" Beloved Belindy said, in her soft cotton-stuffed voice.

"Please do not let anyone see you, Beloved Belindy!" Mrs. Hennypenny said. Then, when Beloved Belindy had crawled through the bushes and sat beside her, the fat hen continued, "If anyone should find that I have a nest out here, they would pick me and my eggs right up and shut us up in a stuffy old barrel with slats across the front!"

"I 'spect it is much nicer out here under the blackberry bushes, Mrs. Hennypenny!" Beloved Belindy agreed.

"Dear me, yes!" Mrs. Hennypenny chuckled down in

her throat, "That's why I ran away from the other chickens and came out here. Do you know what, Beloved Belindy?" she asked.

"Dear me! I could never guess!" Beloved Belindy replied.

"Well sir! I expect all the eggs to hatch tomorrow!" Mrs. Hennypenny said. "Then I will let you cuddle each of the fluffy little downy chickies! But you mustn't tell a single soul!"

Beloved Belindy was glad to promise not to tell and to prove that she would not give away the secret, Beloved Belindy said, "I have a heart, Mrs. Hennypenny, and I'll cross it, never to tell!" And Beloved Belindy criss-crossed right on her heart.

Mrs. Hennypenny laughed softly, "Now I know you will not tell, Beloved Belindy, 'cause when you cross your heart, that means honest and truly!" And she ruffled her feathers and turned around in her nest.

Beloved Belindy walked around so that she was in front of Mrs. Hennypenny again, then said, "I 'spect you get very tired, sitting here all day long!"

"And all night, too!" Mrs. Hennypenny sighed. "Yes," she agreed, "It does get very tiresome, and at times I get very hungry, but I just say to myself, 'Well Mrs. Hennypenny, just think how nice it will be to have twelve cunning little fluffy chicks to tend to'! So I just turn around in my nest and try to forget about being tired."

"Twelve little fluffy baby chicks!" Beloved Belindy said. "Isn't that lovely?"

"Yes indeed!" Mrs. Hennypenny laughed. "I can scarcely wait! I wish that I had a drink of water, though. I get so very thirsty! It makes me fidget a lot!"

"Maybe I can run and get you a drink!" Beloved Belindy said.

"Thank you!" Mrs. Hennypenny replied. "If you will stay here and watch my nest, I will run to the hen-house and get a drink and run right back again!" So Mrs. Hennypenny carefully climbed out of her nest.

"Why! How dreadful!" she cried, as she looked at her nest. "I had twelve eggs there, all day yesterday, and when I came back, a few minutes ago, I was certain they were all there!"

"Maybe there is a hole in the bottom of the nest!" Beloved Belindy said.

"Oh no!" Mrs. Hennypenny clucked. "The nest is made of hay and dried grass and there is no hole. Two of my eggs have disappeared. Oh dear! Oh dear!"

Beloved Belindy felt very sorry for Mrs. Hennypenny and told her so while she wiped Mrs. Hennypenny's eyes with her apron. "Who could have taken your lovely eggs, Mrs. Hennypenny?"

"I don't know!" Mrs. Hennypenny replied with a shake of her head, "But I will run up to the hen-house and get a drink and then I will be right back!"

So Mrs. Hennypenny ran up the path towards the hen-house while Beloved Belindy sat and wondered where Mrs. Hennypenny's eggs could have gone.

Presently Beloved Belindy heard a noise on the other side of the fence. It was a "scritchy scratchy" sort of noise. Then two little black beady eyes peeped through the slats of the fence. "She has gone to get a drink, I guess!" a squeaky voice said.

Beloved Belindy sat very stiff. She never so much as moved, or wiggled even one of her pearl-button eyes. Then two rats came through a crack in the fence and up to Mrs. Hennypenny's nice warm nest. "I wonder if the old fat hen found out we took two of her eggs!" one rat said.

"Oh, I guess not!" the other replied. "Old fat hens are very silly and stupid. They never know how to count."

"I wish Mrs. Hennypenny would hurry and come back!" Beloved Belindy thought. "She would know just what to do, I 'spect!"

"Then we will take two more of her eggs!" the first rat chuckled.

The rats would have taken two more eggs, but Beloved Belindy reached out and caught each rat by the tail.

My! how surprised those two naughty creatures were! They each gave a loud rat squeak, and kicked, and twisted. But Beloved Belindy held on.

The rats tried to bite her, but because Beloved Belindy was made of cloth and stuffed with nice white cotton, the rats could not hurt her one little bit.

Beloved Belindy could hear Mrs. Hennypenny returning, so she held the rats' tails tighter than ever. "Here are the two bad creatures who took your two eggs yesterday, Mrs. Hennypenny!"

"Aha!" Mrs. Hennypenny cried, her little brown eyes blazing with excitement.

"So it was you, was it?" And she pecked both rats upon their heads so hard that she knocked their hats flying, and

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raised lumps as large as raisins. Mrs. Hennypenny would have pecked the two naughty rats still more, if, in her excitement she had not upset Beloved Belindy and made her let go of their tails.

"Thank you, Beloved Belindy!" Mrs. Hennypenny said, settling herself upon her nest again and catching her breath. "Didn't they squeal?"

"I 'spect it served them right!" Beloved Belindy laughed. "And I guess they will never come back again to bother your eggs!"

"Just let me catch them!" Mrs. Hennypenny said, very severe-like. "I'll teach them a lesson they will not forget!"

"Listen!" Beloved Belindy whispered as she held up a warning hand, "I thought I heard a rat squeak! There it goes again! Hear it?"

"I guess I am getting so old, I can't hear very well!" Mrs. Hennypenny whispered back.

"Why I can hear it plain as anything!" Beloved Belindy said, "It sounds around in back of you. I'll just walk around and see!"

Beloved Belindy walked around in back of Mrs. Hennypenny. "Now I can hear squeaking right down under your nest, Mrs. Hennypenny! I'll bet they have dug a tunnel from the fence down in under your nest and will try and take your eggs right out from under you!" Mrs. Hennypenny looked startled. "I felt something move against my leg, Beloved Belindy!" she said. "My! I hope that the rats won't bite me!"

"Maybe you had better get off the nest!" Beloved Belindy suggested.

So Mrs. Hennypenny got off her nest, then both she and Beloved Belindy gave happy cries, for there, sticking its head out of the shell of an egg, was a little baby chickie and two or three other eggs had little holes in them where other chickies were trying to get out.

Mrs. Hennypenny helped the baby chickies as much as she could and in a few minutes there were ten of the cutest, cunningest little balls of fluff peeping about the bottom of the nest. Beloved Belindy cuddled each of the baby chickies and then helped Mrs. Hennypenny clean the nest of the empty egg shells. Then Mrs. Hennypenny climbed upon the nest very carefully so as not to step on the tiny chickies and fluffed her feathers out and sat down.

"The Little Chickies get cold very easily," Mrs. Hennypenny told Beloved Belindy. "I must keep them nice and warm!"

"Indeed, you must!" Beloved Belindy laughed, "I will

be so glad to see you scratching about the orchard and the cunning little baby chicks running about!"

"I will stay down here until tomorrow, I guess!" Mrs. Hennypenny said. "Then I will bring my brood of chickies up to the house and surprise everyone!" So Beloved Belindy said good-bye to Mrs. Hennypenny and ran back to the barrel where Marcella had hidden her two days before.

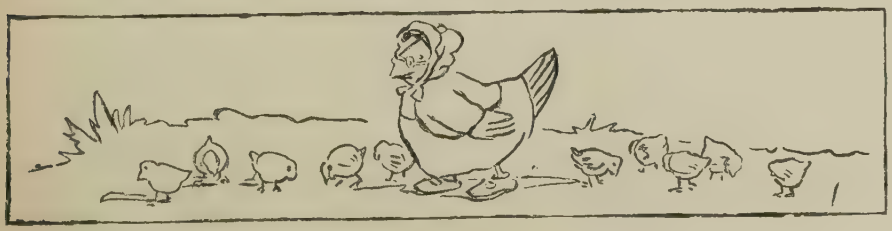
* * * * * *

"I'll go get a barrel and fix them a nice house!" Daddy said as he ran out in the orchard. When he came back, he was carrying Beloved Belindy in one hand and the barrel in the other. "I found Beloved Belindy hiding away at the back of the barrel!" Daddy laughed, "so I brought her to see the new chickies!"

So, while Marcella held Beloved Belindy in the crook of her dimpled arm, Mamma put all the baby chickies in Marcella's lap until the barrel house was finished. "You are just in time to see Mrs. Hennypenny's new family, Beloved Belindy!" Marcella said. "Why don't you act surprised? You just sit there and never say a word!"

And indeed, that is just what Beloved Belindy did. Just sat still and never said a word, but Mrs. Hennypenny clucked and fussed about and winked her little brown eyes at Beloved Belindy and said in her talk, "Didn't I tell you they would put me in a barrel? But I don't care! It's a nice clean one and I have my fluffy family all about me!"

Beloved Belindy smiled her broad smile up at the trees and happy thoughts jiggled against each other all through her soft cotton-stuffed head. For hadn't she been the first one to find out Mrs. Hennypenny's nice secret?



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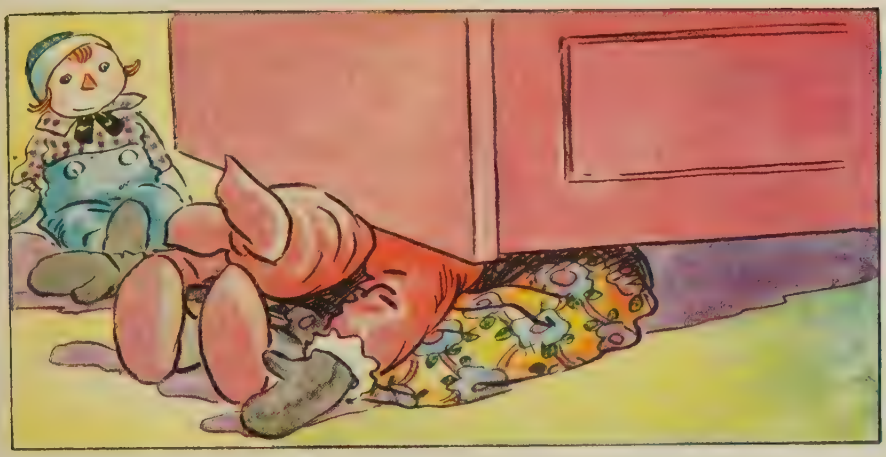
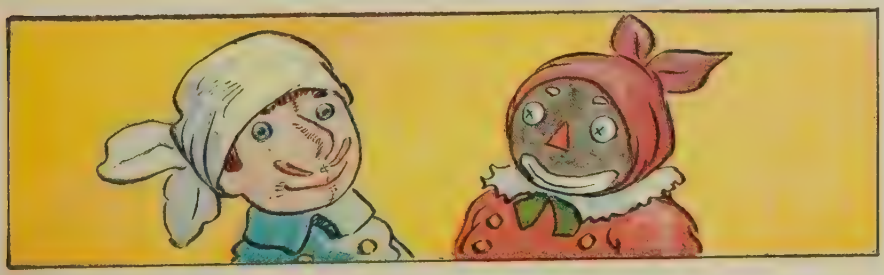


CHAPTER SEVEN

BELOVED Belindy lay upon the floor with her head doubled over her lap. Beloved Belindy did not lie this way because she was crying. No siree! Beloved Belindy was in this position because the toy piano had been pushed over on her and until the real-for-sure people left the room, Beloved Belindy could not get up. Nor could Percy, the policeman, or the other dolls help Beloved Belindy.

Dolls, as you surely must know, always stay in exactly the same position they are put in, when real-for-sure people are around. Because not all real-for-sure people know that dolls can run around and talk and have lots of fun. And if Beloved Belindy had pushed the toy piano away, or if Percy had jumped up from the little white bed and run



across the floor to help Beloved Belindy, all the real-for-sure people who saw him would have cried, "Dear me! Who ever saw a doll get up and run across the floor? Why! It isn't possible!"

So Beloved Belindy stayed just as she was and waited patiently until the real-for-sure people should leave.

And presently they left. Their steps had hardly died away downstairs when Percy, the policeman, jumped from the little toy bed, scattering the bed clothes about, and ran and pulled the little toy piano from Beloved Belindy.

"There!" Policeman Percy said, "I 'spect that feels better, Beloved Belindy!"

"I 'spect it does!" Beloved Belindy replied with a soft, cottony laugh. "But of course you know Percy, it did not hurt a bit to have the toy piano turned over on me!"

"Of course, I know it, Beloved Belindy!" Percy replied. "But just the same, it is much better to be free than to have something doubling you all up in a lump!"

"Is your Eppizoodix better, Percy?" Beloved Belindy asked as she smoothed her apron and took the two Penny Dolls on her wide lap. Policeman Percy laughed, and so did all the other dolls, for they all know that Percy did not have the Eppizoodix, whatever that might be. But Marcella had wrapped up Percy's head in a nice clean white rag and had put him in bed, pretending that Percy was very ill.

This, of course, did not make Percy feel even one little teeny weeny bit badly. Indeed, Percy, the policeman, liked to play that with Marcella, just as all the other dolls did, for, when Marcella pretended that they were ill and put them to bed, she always gave them water with sugar in it.

Water with sugar in it makes the nicest medicine you can imagine, and as Marcella gave the sugar medicine every minute or so, the doll who took it enjoyed it very much.

"Yes!" Policeman Percy replied to Beloved Belindy, "My Eppizoodix is very much better, thank you, Beloved

Belindy, so I will take the nice clean rag from around my head and we will play something nice, with lots of fun in it!"

"What shall we play, Beloved Belindy?" Cleety, the clown asked.

"Shall we get out the little toy stove, and have a fine Thanksgiving dinner?" Beloved Belindy asked in reply.

"Yes, let's do!" Cleety said, walking up on his wooden feet. "Beloved Belindy always enjoys cooking!"

So Beloved Belindy put the two Penny Dolls to one side very carefully, for the Penny Dolls were made of china and their arms or legs might break if they bumped against anything too hard. Then Beloved Belindy brought out the lovely toy stove and the frying pan and the tea-kettle and every thing. "Now who will set the table?" she asked, rattling the little iron skillet upon the top of the stove. Percy, the policeman, and Cleety, the clown, ran and pulled the table out while Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy brought the napkins and table cover.

"Dinner will be ready in sixteen shakes!" Beloved Belindy laughed, as she pulled the cupboard door open and took things out. The little toy stove had a lovely fire in it. It was beautiful red paper, but it crackled just like real-for-sure fire when Beloved Belindy punched it with the teeny poker.

Beloved Belindy put things in the oven and rattled things around upon the top of the stove. She even shook the grate of the stove and asked Cleety if he would please get her another skuttle of coal.

Of course there wasn't any real-for-sure coal in the nursery, but Cleety took the little coal scuttle and the tiny shovel and ran over to the toy piano and shoveled a lot of invisible coal in the coal scuttle. Then he ran back and gave the scuttle to Beloved Belindy.

"Thank you, Cleety!" Beloved Belindy said, very politely. She made the red paper fire crackle again when she put the invisible coal in the stove, then she wiped her

face with her apron and said, "Whew, that's the bestest and hottest fire we have had in a long, long time! I'll bet it will be a fine dinner!"

"The dinner smells very, very good, Beloved Belindy!" Rosie laughed. "I can hardly wait until it is finished!"

"I 'spect it is about done now!" Beloved Belindy said as she opened the oven door and looked inside, "Yes sir!" she added, "It's all done!"

Percy, the policeman, and Cleety, the clown, did not have to be asked to put up the chairs, they ran and dragged them to the table while Raggedy Ann and Beloved Belindy put bibs around the other dolls' necks.

Beloved Belindy pretended that the food taken from the oven was very hot, so she lifted it to the table with a cloth in each hand.

Then she poured every doll a cup of tea.

It was a lovely dinner.

There was a large roast turkey, and a roast chicken, a plate of fruit, and a loaf of bread, a beautiful pie, and a plate of baked potatoes.

Percy served the plates because he was a man doll.

"Will you have some of the lovely turkey?" he asked each doll in turn.

And each doll replied, when asked, "Yes, thank you,

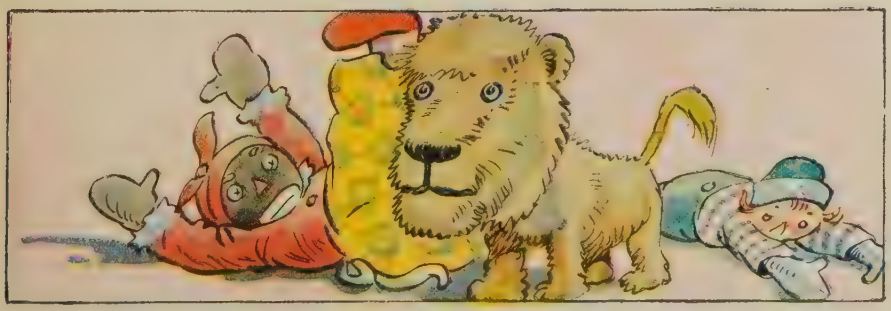
Percy, I would like a piece of the white meat and a drum-stick!"

And, although there were not enough drum-sticks to go around, Percy, the policeman, gave each doll just what he wanted, because, you see, the roasted turkey and chicken and the other things were all made of china, painted as natural as could be. And, though Percy pretended to carve the turkey and chicken, really he did not carve at all.

The plates he served to the dolls were as empty as they were before he served them. But the dolls all pretended that each had a plate heaping full and they all laughed and talked as they pretended to eat.

"Dear Me!" Beloved Belindy said, wiping the faces of the two Penny dolls; "You children must be more careful at the table! Just see how you get cranberry sauce around your mouths!"

The two Penny Dolls laughed, and wiggled their china arms and legs. They knew perfectly well their faces were very clean, but it was fun pretending just the same. Policeman Percy served more turkey and chicken to everyone and then gave each one a piece of pie. Of course, Percy could not cut the pie any easier than he could cut the turkey, but he just pretended. And, as the dolls were sitting at the little table having the best time, laughing and talking, the lid of the large toy box over in the corner of the nursery was raised a little and two cunning eyes looked out. Then the lid of the box went down again and there was a lot of whispering.



In a few seconds, the lid of the toy box flew open and out tumbled the big-headed lion, the cross-eyed puppy dog, the camel with the wrinkled knees, the horse and wagon, and the moo-cow.

They made ever so much noise as they came running towards the table. "I'll eat everyone up!" the big-headed lion cried, trying to make his voice very loud and growly.

"I'll eat everyone up, too!" the cross-eyed puppy dog and the other animals all cried.

They crowded and came so fast, they could not stop when they reached the Thanksgiving dinner; so dolls, table, beautiful china, food and dishes went tumbling to the floor.

"I'll eat this fine roast turkey!" the big-headed lion started to say, but Beloved Belindy had him by the tail and turned him over her lap.

My! How she paddywhacked him!

And Percy, the policeman, and Cleety, the clown, caught the camel with the wrinkled knees and paddywhacked him, while Raggedy Andy paddywhacked the cross-eyed puppy dog.

It was fun, for the lion and the camel and the puppy dog scratched and scrambled and tried to get away, while they howled as loudly as they could. The paddywhacking, of course, did not hurt them one little bit, but they howled just the same, to make it sound more real and to add to the fun.

When Beloved Belindy and the others had tired of playing paddywhack the animals, the lovely china food was picked up and carefully placed in the cupboard where it had been before. The pans and skillets and napkins were carefully put away. Then, when all was nice and tidy, Beloved Belindy asked, "Now, what shall we do with these wild animals who came and ate up all our lovely Thanksgiving dinner?"

"Oh please do not lock us up in cages!" the lion and the camel and puppy dog and moo-cow cried, pretending to be very much frightened and shaky.

"We will never do it again!"

"Aha!" Beloved Belindy laughed, "that is just what you have promised so many times before, Mister Lion, and Mister Camel with the wrinkled Knees, and Mister Cross-eyed Puppydog, and Mrs. Caroline Cow. Just what you have promised before! Now you must be punished very severe-like!" And Beloved Belindy shook her hand at each of the toy animals.

"Dear me!" the lion said as he made his legs wiggle, as if he were frightened. "What had we better do, Camel, and Puppydog, and Cow, and Horse-and-Wagon?"

"Let's run as fast as we can!" the Horse said.

This was just what all the dolls wanted, and it was just what the animals did each time when they played this game. So the horse ran as hard as he could, and the cow ran as hard as she could, and so did all the other animals.

The dolls ran after them, lickety-split, around the nursery. Whenever one of the dolls caught one of the animals, the animal had to give the doll a ride around the room twice. It was very exciting and the cupboard and the toy piano were upset three or four times, but no one was hurt at all. The Penny Dolls were very careful to keep away back out of the way, so their legs would not be broken, but they squeeled in their tiny china voices and enjoyed it as much as anyone else.

Suddenly, a door downstairs banged and Beloved Belindy held up her hand.

"Quick!" she cried. "Everyone to their places!" And with a scramble, the lion and other animals piled into the toy box and lowered the lid. Percy, the policeman, pushed the toy piano over on Beloved Belindy and hopped into bed himself. All the other dolls got in just the same position they were in when Marcella had played with them last.

When Marcella came up the stairs and into the nursery, everything was just as she had left it. Percy, the policeman, even had the nice clean white cloth around his head and

pretended he had the Eppizoodix.

"I hope you have all been good children while Mamma was away!" Marcella said, rattling a paper sack filled with candy. The Dolls, of course, did not reply, but their little heads were filled with laughing thoughts.

Then Marcella noticed that the toy piano was pushed over on to Beloved Belindy and that Belindy's head was lopped over on her lap.

"Why! You poor Beloved Belindy!" Marcella cried, hastening to take the piano away and straighten Beloved Belindy's apron. "Mamma will have to put you to bed after such an accident!"

So Beloved Belindy was put to bed and Percy, the policeman doll, was placed upon a chair nearby. "For," Marcella said, "Percy must be the doctor!" She pulled the table near the bed and put a lot of tiny red and white and blue and pink candies in a little plate.

"Now mamma has to go visiting!" Marcella told Percy. "So you sit right there and give Beloved Belindy a dose of medicine every five minutes!"

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And Percy, the policeman, smiled his wide smile beneath his yarn mustache and his little blue eyes twinkled happily. He knew that as soon as Marcella left, Beloved Belindy would insist on the candy medicine being divided between all the dolls and toy animals.

For Beloved Belindy was as generous and kind, and as helpful and considerate as one could be. That was why she was called, "Beloved Belindy!"

CHAPTER EIGHT

EVERYTHING was very quiet in the nursery. Marcella had put all the toy animals and the little train and cars in the toy box and all the dolls in their little beds.

You could have heard a mouse go trip-tripping over the floor if you had been there and there had been a little mouse to trip-trip.

All the real-for-sure folks had been in bed a long time.

Cleety, the clown, raised up quietly and threw a pillow at Percy, the policeman. Then, before Percy could see who had thrown the pillow, Cleety pulled the covers over his head and pretended that he was fast asleep.

So Percy took the pillow and threw it at Beloved Belindy. Beloved Belindy had been lying with her white pearl-button eyes staring right up at the ceiling, just wishing that some of the dolls would start having fun. So Beloved Belindy threw the pillow and hit Cleety.

Then all the dolls began throwing pillows and having the best pillow fight you ever saw.

Sometimes Percy, the policeman, would be hit with a pillow and knocked out of his bed, and sometimes Beloved Belindy would get knocked out of bed. The girl dolls enjoyed the pillow fight just as much as the boy dolls.

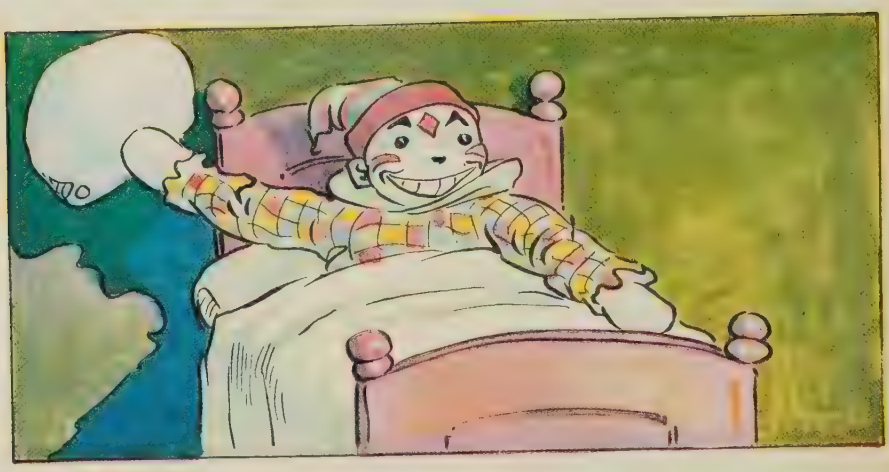
But, after awhile, the dolls grew tired of the pillow fight and gathered around Beloved Belindy's bed.

"Maybe Beloved Belindy will tell us a story!" Cleety, the clown, said.

"Oh yes, Beloved Belindy!" all the dolls cried, "Tell us a story!"

Beloved Belindy rubbed her head with her soft rag hand; "Let me see!" she mused, "I can tell you what I did today, if you would like for me to!"

The dolls all nodded their heads and said, "Yes, Beloved Belindy, tell it!"



"Well!" Beloved Belindy began, "This afternoon, as you dolls all know, Marcella came up to the nursery and took me away. She put me in the doll carriage and gave me a ride away out in the country by the side of the prettiest little brook.

"Marcella's mamma went along, too, for it is much too far for a little girl to go alone.

"And, when we came to the pretty little brook which giggled and tinkled as it hopped over the stones and mossy bank, Marcella took me from the doll carriage so that I could help her pick a lot of lovely flowers.

"There were buttercups, spring daisies, and a strange little green flower which really doesn't look like a flower at all!"

Raggedy Ann pointed to the little toy piano. "There are the flowers in a vase on the little toy piano, Beloved Belindy," Raggedy Ann said.

"Why! So they are!" Beloved Belindy laughed, "I had been lying with my face turned the other way and I did not see Marcella put them there." Beloved Belindy walked over to the toy piano and held up the two little Penny Dolls. "You can see the yellow flowers are the buttercups, the white ones are the spring daisies, and the other is the strange green flower which is not really a flower, I guess!"

"Oh, we know what the green flowers are!" Raggedy Andy said. "Raggedy Ann and I know! We have seen them lots of times growing in shady places in the deep, deep woods!"

"What are they, Raggedy Ann?" Cleety asked.

"They are Jack-in-the-Pulpits!" Raggedy Ann replied.

"Yes! I remember now," Beloved Belindy said. "Marcella's mamma said they were Jack-in-the-Pulpits. See!" and Beloved Belindy lifted the little vase of flowers from the toy piano and placed them upon the floor so that all the dolls could see. "Each Jack-in-the-Pulpit has a little Jack, standing right up in the cup-shaped pulpit. They look like little tiny ministers standing in lovely green striped pulpits!"

"Oh look, Beloved Belindy!" Cleety cried gently pulling the cluster of flowers apart. "Here is a Jack-in-the-Pulpit, closed up tight."

"Maybe he has gone to sleep!" Percy, the policeman suggested.

Beloved Belindy took the Jack-in-the-Pulpit from the case and turned it around and around. "Well!" she said, "Isn't it closed up tight! Now the others are all open as you can see, and each little Jack is standing up as straight as can be!"

"Lift up the top of Jack's pulpit and peep inside!" Raggedy Ann suggested. So Beloved Belindy pulled up the top of the pulpit, and there stood Jack as saucy as could be. And as Beloved Belindy pressed the top of the pulpit back to make it stay, a little teeny weeny creature, only an inch high, came crawling out.

At first all the dolls thought it surely must be a bumblebee, but no! It was a tiny little Elf! One of the cutest little creatures you can possibly find in the woods.

The teeny weeny elf jumped from the Jack-in-the-Pulpit into Beloved Belindy's lap and stretched his tiny legs and arms. All the dolls held their breaths while they watched. They expected the teeny weeny Elf to fly away, for he had two transparent wings. But the little fellow, when he had

straightened his wings and felt his eyebrows to make sure they were not broken, looked up to Beloved Belindy and said:

"Dear me! Dear me, suz! I shall never, never go to sleep inside a Jack-in-the-Pulpit again! No siree! No siree!"

And the tiny elf looked from one doll to another and nodded his head.

"Why! Do you know what? I climbed into Jack's pulpit to keep out of the rain, this morning, and I had no more than got inside, when Jack pulled down the flap of his pulpit! And there I was a prisoner. Yes siree! A prisoner! And it was so close and stuffy inside there, if I had not been a Fairy I do not know what would have happened!"

Just then one of the buttercups wiggled and jiggled, and another little teeny weeny Elf raised up from where he had been sleeping. "Ah!" the last little Elf said as he saw the first little Elf, "I thought I heard an Elf talking, but I was so sleepy, it seemed as though I were dreaming!"

"It's my brother, Eddy Elf," the first Elf said to Beloved Belindy, and he told Eddy Elf what he had just told the dolls!

Eddy Elf laughed a tinkly musical little laugh, "Oh! That was a good joke on you, Elmer Elf! Why! You should have known that Jack-in-the-Pulpit would close his pulpit and make you a prisoner!"

Eddy Elf gave a spring from the buttercup and flew down beside his brother, while all the dolls crowded close around Beloved Belindy to see better.

Eddy Elf sat down on Beloved Belindy's soft rag hand beside his brother Elmer and looking up at the dolls in front of him, said, "Jack-in-the-Pulpit belongs to the Lily family. Jack is a cute little fellow and is a cousin to the beautiful Calla Lily, but he is also a cousin to the first green-leaved plant which comes up in the Spring—the Skunk Cabbage. And maybe Jack learned some of his cousin's tricks. For, whenever insects crawl into Jack's cunning little pulpit in search of honey, Jack closes the top of his pulpit and eats the little insects. So, it was really a mighty good thing

that Elmer Elf was a Fairy, or he would have fared the same as any bee, or fly."

"Well!" Percy, the policeman, said, "We are very glad that Elmer Elf happened to be in the Jack-in-the-Pulpit which Beloved Belindy picked today, for he might have had to stay there a long, long time, like the Genii who was shut up in a bottle for years!"

"And I'll tell you what, Beloved Belindy!" Elmer Elf said, "like the Genii in the bottle, I am so glad you rescued me, I will let you make a magic wish and the wish will come true!"

"Isn't that lovely?" Beloved Belindy cried. "But then Elmer Elf, you must know, it really was not I who picked the Jack-in-the-Pulpit! It was Marcella, and she is asleep in her bed in another room. If anyone should have the wish, it ought to be Marcella, not I!"

"Hm!" Elmer Elf mused. "You are right, Beloved Belindy! Though there are not many who would have told me that. They would have been so anxious to have a wish come true that they'd have forgotten to say anything about anyone else!"

"Anyway," Beloved Belindy said, "I thank you just the same, teeny weeny Elmer Elf, and I hope that you and your brother, Eddy Elf, come to see us very often here in the nursery!"

"If you would care to make that a wish, I will make it come true!" Elmer Elf laughed.

"Then I do wish it!" Beloved Belindy said.

Elmer Elf took the Jack-in-the-Pulpit that had made him a prisoner and replaced it in the vase. He shook his tiny fist at Jack and said:

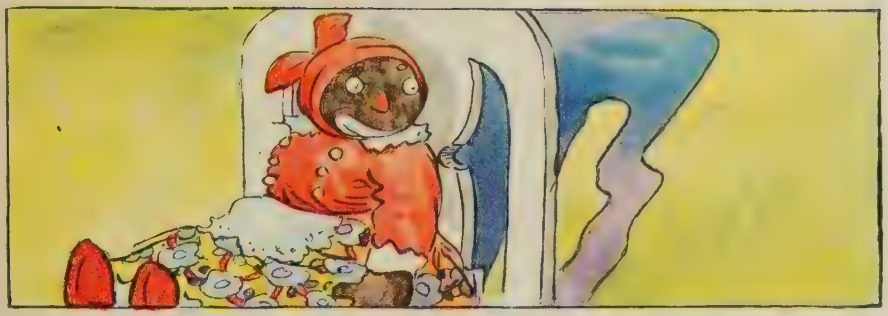
"After this, you be careful, Master Jack!" Then he turned and winked his weeny eye at the dolls, so they might know he was not the least bit angry with Jack. He and Eddy Elf caught hold of hands, and, with a kick against

Beloved Belindy's white apron, they whirred on their little wings up into the air and out the window.

The dolls watched the two cunning creatures out of sight, then sat quietly until Beloved Belindy spoke, "Now, wasn't that a nice story I told you, after all?" she laughed.

"Indeed it was!" Cleety, the clown agreed.

"And the nicest part of the story was the happy ending!" Beloved Belindy said, "for little teeny weeny Elmer Elf was not angry with poor little Jack-in-the-Pulpit, and easily forgave him for making a mistake and catching an Elf instead of a big fly!"



CHAPTER NINE

BELOVED BELINDY had gone visiting with Marcella and did not return until late in the evening. So she was placed upon a chair in the dining-room until Marcella had eaten her supper.

Then, as it was bed-time, Marcella had only time to carry Beloved Belindy into the nursery and put her in a chair before she scampered off to bed.

Belindy did not mind this, for even if Marcella had put Belindy to bed, Beloved Belindy would have jumped from the bed as soon as she knew all the real-for-sure people in the house had gone to sleep.

So Beloved Belindy just sat in the chair and looked straight out in front and never so much as wiggled or twisted about to see who was making the scratching noise over in the corner. When Mamma and Daddy had gone to bed and the house had grown quiet, Beloved Belindy turned her head, just a wee bit at a time, until she looked over in the corner where she had heard the scratching noise.

"Oh my! Dear me, suz!" Beloved Belindy cried as she jumped to the floor, her cotton-stuffed feet thumping soft thumps as she ran.

"Dear me! Dear me!" Belindy exclaimed when she reached the corner. "Poor thing! He's as flat as a pan cake!"

At this, all the dolls raised up in their beds and looked towards Beloved Belindy.

"What in the world has happened, Beloved Belindy?" Raggedy Ann asked.

"Just you come and see, Raggedy Ann!" Beloved Belindy replied. "Something has happened to Percy, the policeman! My! My! His saw-dust stuffing is scattered everywhere and one of his legs is off and he is all flat!"

All the dolls scrambled from their beds and ran to Beloved Belindy. Sure enough, there was Percy, the Policeman, with hardly a grain of saw-dust left in his body and his clothes were a sight.

Beloved Belindy lifted Percy by the back of his coat and his head just lopped over upon his breast and his rag leg hung limp beneath him.

"I guess that is the last of Policeman Percy!" Cleety, the clown said. "I remember once, when one of the toy animal's stuffing came out, Marcella's mamma put it in the ash can, and we never saw the animal again! Yes sir! I guess, Policeman Percy will be thrown in the ash can tomorrow when Marcella's mamma sees him!

"And I just guess he won't be thrown in the ash can, Cleety!" Beloved Belindy said as she stamped her soft rag foot." Policeman Percy is too nice and kind and lovable to be thrown away, and I am sure it would make Marcella very, very sad to see poor Percy in this condition."

"But if he has no saw-dust in him, he is no good any more!" Cleety said.

"Oh Cleety!" Raggedy Andy cried, "do be quiet! Can't you see we are all trying to think of some way to help save Percy?"

"Anyway, I know Policeman Percy will be thrown into the ash can the first thing in the morning!" Cleety persisted.

Raggedy Andy could not stand this any longer, so he caught up Cleety and carried him to his bed and rolled him up in his covers so tight he couldn't get out. Cleety cried "Let me out," a few times in his wooden voice, then nothing more was heard from him.

Just then there was a scritch-scratch and over in another corner of the room, the dolls saw little Hairy, the puppy dog.

Hairy was trying to scrootch way down in his basket.

"Do you know what?" Beloved Belindy cried, pointing her rag hand toward Fido's basket, "I'll bet anything that Hairy shook up Policeman Percy and tore off his leg and scattered his saw-dust stuffing all about!"

"Did you?" Raggedy Andy asked. He ran to Hairy's basket and peeped over the edge.

Hairy, the puppy dog, never so much as moved.

"Here, you Hairy!" Raggedy Andy cried as he gave Hairy a punch with his rag hand. "Did you shake up Policeman Percy?"

Hairy could not pretend to be sleeping after Raggedy Andy poked him, so he yawned and raised up in his basket and stretched. "Dear me!" Hairy said in a bored manner. "What is all the great fuss about?"

"Just you come look at Percy, the Policeman, and see for yourself!" Beloved Belindy replied.

Hairy jumped from his basket and came over and sniffed at Policeman Percy.

"He isn't worth anything any more!" Hairy said. And he turned to go back to his basket.

"Just you wait a minute, Mister Hairy!" Beloved Belindy cried. She caught the puppy dog's tail and held on tight. "Who do you 'spose did this to poor old Policeman Percy?"

"You just let go of my tail, Miss Beloved Belindy, if you do not wish to be shaken up, too!" Hairy snapped, and turning quickly, he upset Beloved Belindy and Raggedy Ann at the same time.

This was more than Raggedy Andy could stand, so he gave Hairy a push that sent him head over heels, then, as Beloved Belindy scrambled to her feet, Raggedy Andy caught up a piece of rope.

Hairy kicked and wiggled as hard as he could, but in a few moments, Raggedy Andy, Raggedy Ann and Beloved

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Belindy had him tied so that he could only wiggle his ears and whine.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Hairy Puppydog?" Beloved Belindy said. And she shook her rag hand at Hairy's nose.

"No, I'm not!" the puppy dog snapped, "I was just playing with Policeman Percy and how was I to know his leg would come off?"

"But you should have seen that he was losing all his saw-dust stuffing!" Beloved Belindy said. "Now we must pick up all the saw-dust and put it back into Percy and sew his leg on again!"

So Beloved Belindy and Raggedy Andy and Sarah began picking up the saw-dust. It was a long job, because it had been scattered so far.

Finally Beloved Belindy cried, "Wait a minute! I know how to make it easy! We will use the carpet sweeper!"

So Beloved Belindy got the toy carpet sweeper and swept up all the saw-dust. Then, while Raggedy Ann and Sarah held Policeman Percy upside down, Beloved Belindy poured the saw-dust into Policeman Percy with a spoon.

As the saw-dust ran down to Percy's head, Sarah and Raggedy Andy patted it down nice and tight, just as it had been before. When Policeman Percy's head had been stuffed nice and tight with the saw-dust, he wiggled first one little blue eye, then the other one.

"What kind of a game is this?" Policeman Percy asked.

"It isn't a game!" Beloved Belindy replied, "All your saw-dust stuffing was out, and we are putting it back."

"Ah!" the policeman doll sighed, "That's the reason I felt so light-headed, I guess!"

Presently Beloved Belindy had all the saw-dust back in Percy's body, and had filled the leg which was torn off. Then Beloved Belindy sewed on his leg.

"Aha! I remember now!" Policeman Percy laughed, while Beloved Belindy took the last stitch and cut the thread. "I was playing with Hairy, the puppy dog, and my leg came off. I could hear all my saw-dust go swishing about."

"And Hairy wasn't the least bit sorry he did it!" Raggedy Andy said. "He even knocked Raggedy Ann and Beloved Belindy over when we tried to make him feel ashamed, so we had to tie his legs!"

Policeman Percy stood up and wiggled his legs around, "They are just as good as ever!" he laughed. Then he walked over to the puppy dog. "I 'spect we had better untie his feet now!" he said.

The puppy dog looked up at the policeman doll and thumped his tail upon the floor, "Really and truly, Percy," Hairy said, "I did not think when I was shaking you!"

Percy, the Policeman, just laughed and gave Hairy a playful push, "I do not care if you shake me up, Hairy but stop when you hear anything rip!" he said.

CHAPTER TEN

DICKIE Bird had hung in the nursery for a long time. He had a pretty little brass cage with a water cup and a feed cup so that he could sing awhile, then take a drink and then eat his dinner and then sing again.

All the dolls enjoyed Dickie Bird's cheery songs, and, when no real-for-sure people were about, the dolls would climb upon the window-sill and let Dickie Bird peck their hands. Dickie Bird would pretend he was having a hard fight when the dolls did this, and he would spread his yellow wings out and flutter them while he pecked and pretended to scold.

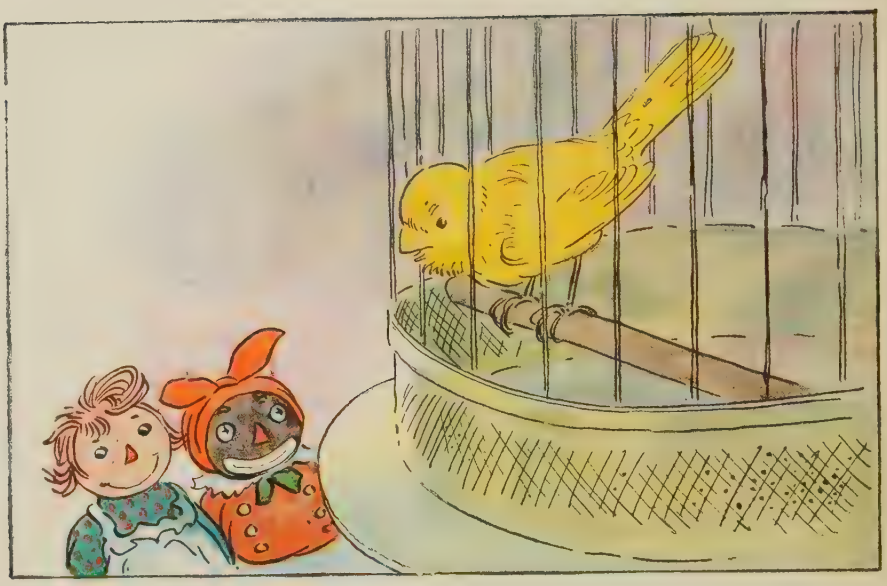
It was lots of fun and Dickie enjoyed it as much as all the dolls. Sometimes when the dolls were sitting very quietly and not wiggling about, because Marcella, or some other person was in the room, Dickie Bird would look down at the dolls and call, "SWEET! SWEET! Come and have a fight!"

But, of course, the dolls would not stir, for they did not wish anyone to know they were truly alive. But they would think to themselves, "Just you wait, pretty little Dickie Bird! When the folks leave, we will have a fine fight!" And, of course, when the folks left, the dolls would play with Dickie Bird. So, you can see, they were all very good friends.

Sometimes Marcella would climb upon a chair and let Dickie Bird peck her finger. Dickie Bird really and truly belonged to Marcella and would always chirp to her when she came in the room.

One day, Dickie Bird had knocked down his cuttle fish-bone from the top of his pretty cage and Marcella reached inside to fix it, when, before Marcella could stop him, Dickie Bird jumped over her hand and flew out into the room.

It was the first time Dickie Bird had ever been outside



his cage. Very often, when he had seen other birds flying by the window, Dickie Bird had longed to fly outside, too, and he had chirped to Beloved Belindy and said:

"My! It must be nice to fly outside in the warm sunshine and hop from one flower to another. I wish that I could get out of this little cage so that I could fly for miles and miles!"

And Beloved Belindy had replied, "It does seem as if it would be nice, Dickie Bird, but still, while you are in your nice little brass cage here, you always have a cup of cool water and a cup of lovely bird seed. The folks bring you leaves of lettuce, celery, pieces of apples and everything nice to eat. If you were outside, you would not have all those nice things and I am sure you would not enjoy yourself one half as much as you do right here."

Of course, Dickie Bird did not believe what Beloved Belindy said and he spread his wings and fluttered them as if he would like to fight.

Now that Dickie Bird was free, he flew right out of the window to a large tree in the yard. Marcella did not know

what to do. So she ran downstairs and told Mamma.

"Mamma," she said, tears rolling down her pretty cheeks, "I did not mean to let Dickie Bird out of his cage!"

"I know you didn't, Marcella!" Mamma said in her soft voice. "We will go out in the yard and try to coax Dickie Bird back into his cage!"

So she and Marcella took Dickie Bird's cage out in the yard and tried in every way to coax Dickie Bird to return.

Dickie Bird saw them and knew just what they wished, but he did not intend to return. No indeed! He fluttered his wings a little and scolded, just as he did when he pretended to fight. But he did not come any closer.

Dickie Bird did not know how sad it made Marcella, or maybe he would have returned to his cage right away. Instead, when Mamma and Marcella tried to get close to him, Dickie Bird flew farther away until Mamma finally said, "We had better not follow him for he is just flying farther and farther from home. We will take his cage up to the nursery and leave the door open. Maybe he will return!"

"We must leave the window of the nursery open, too, Mamma!" Marcella said.

So Dickie Bird's cage was hung in the nursery window and all the dolls felt sad when they looked up and saw it so empty.

"We shall miss Dickie Bird's happy singing!" Beloved Belindy said.

"Indeed, we will!" the other dolls agreed.

Once, Beloved Belindy climbed to the window-sill and peeped out through the curtains. Yes, there sat Dickie Bird on the limb of a tree. He did not seem to be having as much fun as he had thought he would.

And as Beloved Belindy watched, the other dolls climbed up beside her and watched, too. Presently two English Sparrows flew near Dickie Bird and he chirped, "Sweet! Sweet!"

"Well, well!" one of the sparrows said, twisting his head to one side, "what kind of bird is this!" and he hopped along the branch close to Dickie Bird.

Dickie Bird could see that both of the sparrows were dusty and brown and needed to bathe. So he spread out his wings and fluttered them as he did when he pretended he wished to fight.

"Ho ho!" the first sparrow cried, "I guess he wants to fight!" So he ruffled his feathers and gave Dickie Bird a peck on top of his head.

Dickie Bird had never had anyone fight back at him when he pretended. He chirped loudly.

"Aha! He's afraid!" both sparrows cried, and they both pecked Dickie Bird until he flew away from them.

All this time, Beloved Belindy and the other dolls watched Dickie Bird and there was nothing they could do for him.

At last, when the two fighting sparrows had gone, Dickie Bird flew down upon a rose-bush and chirped, "SWEET! SWEET!"

"Oh dear!" Beloved Belindy whispered to the other dolls, "The poor little thing cannot see that mean old cruel cat creeping up behind the bush! Oh! I wish Marcella would come out in the yard and chase the cat away!"

But Marcella did not come out.

Instead, the cruel cat came closer and closer, her tail twitching at the end, her cruel eyes never once leaving the little bird.

"Then, when she thought she was close enough, the wicked creature gave a spring. Dickie Bird gave a shrill cry and fluttered up in the air, leaving two or three of his yellow feathers in the cat's claws.

Beloved Belindy held her rag hands over her pearl-button eyes for she really believed that would be the last of her cheery little friend.

"Oh Goody! Oh Goody!" Cleety, the clown, cried when he saw Dickie Bird escape. "The wicked cat did not catch him!"

Then Beloved Belindy took her hands away from her pearl-button eyes and saw little Dickie Bird, shivering upon a limb high up in the tree.

"I'll bet he wishes he were back in his cage!" Percy, the policeman, said.

"Yes! I guess he does!" Beloved Belindy agreed. "But I believe now the poor little dear is so frightened he does not know what to do!"

And indeed, this was quite true. Dickie Bird did not know what to do, he was afraid to fly near the ground, for every once in a while one of those fussy brown English Sparrows would fly near him and scold him.

When the sparrows fussed at him, Dickie Bird did not pretend he wished to fight. It wasn't any fun at all. He had not had a drink of water now for hours. He had only had two little green worms to eat, and they did not taste good. He wished that he could put his yellow head into his drinking cup and take a long drink of water. He wished that he could crack the tiny seeds in his seed cup and eat the good kernels inside. He wished he had not been so foolish. But, he did not know what to do. He was so frightened at the bigness of the great out-doors. At the strange sounds and things he saw. And so the frightened little creature sat, very sad and lonely, shivering upon the branch of a tree, hiding, as well as he could, amongst the green leaves.

Beloved Belindy and the other dolls watched from the nursery window until the sun went down and darkness settled over all. "Poor little Dickie Bird!" Beloved Belindy said, "I wonder where he will be in the morning?"

"I 'spect the cat will climb the tree in the darkness and catch him!" Cleety, the clown, said.

"Oh dear! Do you think so, Cleety?" Beloved Belindy asked.

"I saw the cat sitting under the tree watching him!" Cleety replied, "And that old cat was so disappointed when Dickie Bird escaped, she will try to catch him as soon as he goes to sleep!"

"Then we must help him!" Beloved Belindy said. "Will you go with me, Cleety?"

"And I will go, too!" Percy, the policeman said.

"I tell you what we had better do!" Beloved Belindy said, "Cleety and I will go, but you other dolls must get some string to pull us back up to the window when we return!"

"There's a whole ball of twine here in the toy box!" Percy said, "I would like to go with you, Beloved Belindy, but I will stay here and help pull you back to the window when you return. For I am very strong!"

So Beloved Belindy and Cleety, the clown, caught hold of the twine and the other dolls lowered them from the window.

The first thing Cleety did was to pick up a long stick. And, when he and Beloved Belindy came to the foot of the tree and saw the wicked old cat sitting there looking with longing eyes up at Dickie Bird, Cleety, the clown, gave her such a crack with the stick, she let out a loud, "MARIAR!" and went scooting around the house as fast as she could run.

Beloved Belindy and Cleety had to laugh, even though they knew it was not right to strike anything with a stick. But the wicked old cat was so surprised she looked funny.

It took Beloved Belindy quite a while to climb up to where Dickie Bird sat huddled in a little fluffy ball. He had his head tucked under his wing and was fast asleep.

Beloved Belindy put both her soft rag hands around Dickie Bird and held him tight. At first, though, he tried

to fly away, but Beloved Belindy held him close to her soft rag body.

"It's me, Beloved Belindy!" she whispered to Dickie Bird. She could feel his little frightened heart thumping against her apron.

"Cleety, the clown, and I have come to take you back to your cage! So do not wiggle, or kick any more than you can help!"

"I won't!" Dickie Bird promised, "I shall never fly outside my cage again, if I can only get back there!"

Percy, the policeman and Raggedy Ann and Sarah and even the teeny weeny penny dolls helped pull Beloved Belindy up to the window sill. Cleety, the clown doll, stayed down at the bottom with his stick to see that the cat did not return to take Dickie Bird away from Beloved Belindy before she was pulled up to the window-sill. Then, when Dickie was put in his cage, the dolls all pulled Cleety up.

"Now that Dickie Bird is safe, we had all better go to beddie!" Beloved Belindy told the other dolls. You see, she had to act as Mamma to them, when Marcella was away. So Beloved Belindy tucked the little teeny weeny penny dolls in their spool-box bed, and helped the other dolls get settled for the night, then she got in her own little white bed.

Beloved Belindy lay with her little white pearl-button eyes looking up at the ceiling for a long time. Many thoughts ran laughing and jumping happily through her cotton-stuffed head, and her heart was as joyous as any real-for-sure person's heart when he feels he has done a kindly deed for another.

Then, very softly, Beloved Belindy pushed back her covers and climbed up beside Dickie Bird's pretty cage. Very gently, she opened the door of the cage and crept back to bed.

So silently and gently did Beloved Belindy's rag hands do this that Dickie Bird did not take his head from under his wing.

"Now," Beloved Belindy whispered softly to herself, "the folks will think Dickie Bird came back of his own accord. But if I had left the door of his cage closed, they would have wondered how he had managed to get inside and close it behind him."

And Beloved Belindy pulled the covers up over her pearl-button eyes and smiled in the dark until the pleasant thought in her cotton-stuffed head turned into the happiest of lovely dreams.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WHEN Grandma visited Marcella, she asked Marcella what she would like "mostly." And Marcella, being hungry at the time, replied, "Cookies!"

So Grandma smiled, just as if she had known what Marcella would say, and got out the mixing bowls and pans and everything she needed.

Grandma even let Marcella help stir the cookie batter while Beloved Belindy sat near in a chair and watched.

Beloved Belindy never said a word all the time, but her bright little pearl-button eyes seemed to take in everything that went to the making and mixing of the cookies. And she thought to herself, 'way back in her cotton-stuffed head, "I 'spect, sometime, when the folks are 'way from home, that I will be able to make nice cookies, too!"

Grandma explained to Marcella just why she stirred the eggs with the sugar and butter and just how much flour she put in. And as Grandma paused in her explanations, Marcella turned to Beloved Belindy and repeated what she could remember of the cookie lesson.

"For," said Marcella, "maybe sometime, Beloved Belindy, when you grow up and get to be a Grandma, you will wish to make cookies for someone. And it is nice to know just how to do it!"

"Yes, indeed, Beloved Belindy," Grandma chuckled, "it's lots and lots of fun!"

When all the batter was stirred and the cookies had been placed in a pan in the oven, Grandma let Marcella "lick" the mixing bowl.

Of course, Marcella did not really and truly "lick" the mixing bowl, for nice little girls, or even boys, for that matter, do not eat that way. Only puppy dogs have to eat that way. Marcella scraped the batter from around the edges of the bowl and ate the batter with a spoon. That is the nice way. She even gave Beloved Belindy a lot of "licks,"

too. The cookie batter was really good.

Beloved Belindy almost stopped smiling the first taste Marcella gave her, for the spoon had too much cookie batter on it and it got all over Beloved Belindy's black face and hid the smile—all except one corner.

Marcella soon wiped Beloved Belindy's face nice and clean with a wash rag and that made the sweetness of the batter soak in.

When the cookies were almost done, Grandma looked in the oven every once in a while to see them. And the fragrance of the cookies came out into the kitchen and out of the window and across the yard and the little girl next door came over to visit Marcella.

Grandma winked knowingly at Beloved Belindy and told the little girl, "I'm glad you came over, because I am fixing a nice surprise!"

And the little girl said she guessed she knew what it was.

Grandma asked, "What is it?"

And, when the little girl said, "Cookies!" Grandma laughed again and with a holder, took the large pan of cookies from the oven.

My! They looked and smelled so good! So Grandma

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gave Marcella and her little friend three cookies apiece and the two children ran out into the yard to eat their cookies and to play. Beloved Belindy stayed in the chair to help Grandma wash the bowls and pans. But Beloved Belindy did not help much. She sat quite still and looked on. Grandma said once, "My! Beloved Belindy, I do not know what I would do, if it weren't for your helping me wash so many things!" And Beloved Belindy felt all her cotton stuffing shake. She had a hard time to keep from laughing right out loud and talking to Grandma.

Grandmas are so nice, you know. It just seems as if they really and truly must come from Fairyland. And, to Beloved Belindy, it seemed as if Grandma must know that dolls can really and truly talk, just like people, if they wish.

(Perhaps Grandmas do know this. Sometime, I shall ask a nice Grandma all about it and I will tell you. For if it is really so, it should not be kept a secret any longer.)

So, Grandma talked to Beloved Belindy and Beloved Belindy had a hard time sitting still. "Now just see there, Beloved Belindy!" Grandma said, "there are hundreds of little ants climbing up into the cupboard to reach the cookies! If they would just stay outside the house, I would take a lot of cookies out near their homes and crumble the sweet crumbs all about, but no, they must come inside the house and annoy us!"

So Grandma got a rag and tried to shoo all the ants down to the floor, but ants do not shoo very well when there are sweet things lying about. When all the pans and bowls were washed and wiped and put away, Grandma went into the living-room.

That night, after all the folks had gone to bed, and the house was quiet, Beloved Belindy wiggled from the kitchen chair and looked at the long string of ants. They came in a tiny crack near the sink, walked across the kitchen floor to the corner of the cupboard, and then up the side.

"You ants must go outside the house!" Beloved Belindy

said, in her soft cottony voice. "It isn't nice for you to come tramping in here by hundreds and swarming up into the cupboard. Don't you know that a great many of you will get into the sugar and spoil that. Don't you know that hundreds of you will fall in the syrup pitcher and stick there? Then all the syrup will have to be thrown away!"

But, although Beloved Belindy spoke to the little ants in her kindest tone, the little creatures did not reply to her. Or perhaps they really did, but their voices might have been so tiny that Beloved Belindy could not hear.

Anyway, when the little ants would not answer Beloved Belindy, she said, "Then if you won't answer, and if you still wish to take what does not belong to you, I will have to get after you! That's what!"

And Beloved Belindy tiptoed upstairs to the nursery and awakened Percy, the Policeman.

Beloved Belindy told Percy all about the ants and Percy agreed to help Beloved Belindy get after them.

So, without awakening the other dolls, Beloved Belindy and Percy, the Policeman, went down-stairs. Beloved Belindy had an idea, and she asked Percy what he thought of it.

"It's a dandy, fine idea, Beloved Belindy," Percy said. "And I am sure it will not hurt the ants one-half as much as if Grandma pours boiling water upon them. But tell me, Beloved Belindy, won't the little ants chew holes in the sides of the bag?"

"Oh! We will not give them time to do that, Percy!" Beloved Belindy replied.

"All right then!" said Percy, and he ran behind the door and brought out the vacuum cleaner. Beloved Belindy had watched Mamma use the attachment to clean the window curtains and mattresses many times, so she knew just how to fix things.

Then, when the vacuum cleaner was all ready, Percy, the policeman, put the plug in the base-board socket and

the vacuum cleaner began to hum, just like a swarm of bees. As Beloved Belindy held the long tube attachment to one side she said to the ants, "Now I will give you one more chance to run to your homes. If you don't start when I count three, you will all go up into the vacuum cleaner!" But the little ants either did not believe Beloved Belindy, or else they were very contrary. Anyway, they just kept running across the kitchen and up into the cupboard, the same as ever.

"ONE! TWO! THREE!" Beloved Belindy counted, real slow to give the ants a fair chance.

But as they did not run home, Beloved Belindy held the tube over them and walked across the kitchen to the cupboard and held the tube up as high as she could reach to where the ants went into the cupboard.

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